



CYBIT



MICROSOFT UNLOCKED: TOOLS, TRENDS AND WHAT TO DO NEXT

Microsoft Newsletter
April Edition



Microsoft
Solutions Partner



MICROSOFT NEWSLETTER -APRIL 2026

Welcome to the April edition of Cybit's Microsoft Newsletter, our bi-monthly look at the Microsoft developments most likely to matter to organisation's like yours.

This month, the themes are fairly clear. Microsoft is continuing to push hard on AI, though the more interesting story is not only the AI tooling itself. It is the way Microsoft is now wrapping AI into identity, security, governance, data protection, and operational control. At the same time, the data and business application platforms continue to evolve quickly, and some long-standing Microsoft technologies are getting much closer to retirement.

The result is that companies are being asked to think a little differently. It is no longer only about whether a feature exists. It is about whether the surrounding controls, data foundations, licensing model, and user readiness are mature enough to make proper use of it. Microsoft's recent announcements around Microsoft 365 E7, Agent 365, Security Dashboard for AI, Fabric, and the 2026 release wave 1 plans for Dynamics 365 and Power Platform all reinforce that direction.

In this edition, we'll cover:

- ✓ Microsoft 365 E7 and what sits behind the Frontier Suite message.
- ✓ Microsoft Agent 365 and the shift towards governed AI agents.
- ✓ Security Dashboard for AI and the wider security response to AI growth.
- ✓ Microsoft Fabric and why governance is becoming central to the data story.
- ✓ Dynamics 365 and Power Platform updates that are worth real attention.
- ✓ Supporting updates across Teams, lifecycle planning, SharePoint retirement, and end-user adoption.

MODERN WORKPLACE

Microsoft 365 E7

Microsoft 365 E7 is one of the most important Microsoft announcements of the year so far. Microsoft describes it as the Frontier Suite, bringing together Microsoft 365 Copilot, Agent 365, Microsoft Entra Suite, and advanced capabilities across Defender, Intune, and Purview into a single offer. Microsoft announced it on 9th March 2026 and says it becomes generally available on 1st May 2026 at \$99 per user per month.

What is genuinely useful about E7 is not that it introduces entirely new technical categories on its own. In reality, much of the capability already existed across Microsoft's estate. The real shift is that Microsoft is now packaging AI, identity, security, compliance, and device governance as a single strategic layer rather than expecting organisations to stitch

those conversations together themselves. That is a sensible direction. Most organisations looking seriously at AI now end up in exactly those surrounding conversations anyway, whether that starts with Copilot, Purview, Defender, Intune, or Entra.

From a practical point of view, the suite matters for three reasons. First, it simplifies procurement and positioning for organisations already moving towards a high-control Microsoft stack. Second, it reinforces the idea that AI rollout without governance is no longer where Microsoft wants the market to be. Third, it gives organisations a more obvious commercial route if they are currently juggling E5, Copilot, identity add-ons, compliance add-ons, and various security components separately. That will not make it the right fit for everyone, though it does make it highly relevant for organisations reviewing their long-term Microsoft licensing strategy.

That said, it is also worth being honest about what E7 is not. It is not a shortcut past poor data governance, weak access control, or unclear use cases. For organisations with untidy SharePoint permissions, unmanaged endpoints, patchy Purview adoption, or no real AI operating model, E7 may improve the licensing position, though it will not solve the foundational issues on its own. In that sense, E7 is best seen as an accelerator for organisations that already want to move in this direction, rather than a simple upgrade path that automatically creates maturity.

A final point worth making is that E7 is also a sign of where Microsoft thinks value is shifting. For years, premium Microsoft licensing was largely framed around security, compliance, and productivity at a user level. E7 suggests the next tier is about governed AI at enterprise scale, with agents treated as first-class actors that need identity, policy, observability, and threat protection. That is the more interesting story behind the bundle.

MICROSOFT 365 E7 The Frontier Suite

General Availability 1st May 2026



[Read more: Introducing the First Frontier Suite built on Intelligence + Trust](#)



Copilot Business

Microsoft is continuing to position Microsoft 365 Copilot Business as the AI option for businesses using the Microsoft 365 Business plans. It is aimed at businesses with up to 300 users and is available as an add-on for customers with an eligible Microsoft 365 plan, making it particularly relevant for businesses already on Business Standard or Business Premium.

That is what makes it a strong fit for many small and mid-sized businesses. It gives users access to Copilot across the Microsoft 365 apps they already use every day, while allowing IT to keep everything within the Microsoft environment they already manage. Microsoft's current offers also make this a good time to review it, with promotional pricing available through to the 30th June 2026 and some bundle pricing changing from 1st July 2026.

The real challenge, though, is rarely buying Copilot. It is deploying it well. The businesses that tend to get the most value are the ones that start with a small pilot group, clear use cases, and a review of permissions and data structure, rather than assigning licences too widely too early.

IS COPILOT RIGHT FOR YOU?

If you would like to understand whether Copilot Business is the right fit for your business, or want to review the current promotional options before 30th June 2026, please speak to **Cybit**. We can help you review eligibility, licensing, and the best route into a controlled rollout.

AI

Microsoft Agent 365

If Microsoft 365 E7 is the packaging story, Microsoft Agent 365 is probably the more important operational story. Microsoft describes Agent 365 as the control plane for agents, giving IT one place to observe, govern, and secure every agent across the organisation. Microsoft says it will be generally available on 1st May 2026 as part of qualifying Microsoft 365 plans or as a standalone plan.

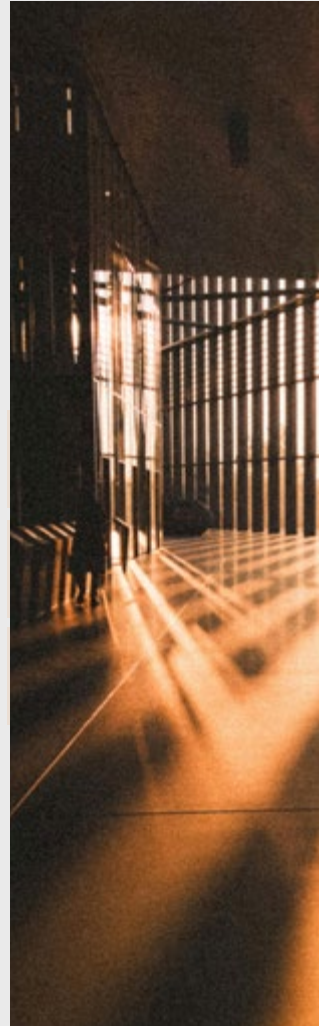
What that means in practice is that Agent 365 is not another chatbot front end. It is the management and governance layer for agents that are built, brought in, or used across the business. Microsoft's own material highlights capabilities such as inventory, analytics, telemetry, dashboards, alerts, policy controls, and unified observability across the agent estate. Microsoft also says all agents acting on behalf of a licensed user are covered under that user's Agent 365 or Microsoft 365 E7 licence, which is an important detail for organisation's thinking about scale.

Microsoft also says Agent 365 enforces least-privilege access, secures agent access to resources, protects sensitive data, and includes advanced threat protection and vulnerability management. That combination matters because the AI conversation is changing quite quickly. The first wave was mostly about prompts, summarisation, drafting, and assistance. The next wave is about agents doing more structured work, following instructions over time, interacting with systems, and in some cases driving outcomes rather than only generating content.

Once that happens, the identity and governance model matters far more. An agent that can read data, trigger actions, access systems, or influence workflows needs to be understood much more like a managed identity or application service than like a glorified chatbot. That part is not always said explicitly in Microsoft marketing, though it is clearly implied by the control-plane model.

There are a few details here that organisation's should pay attention to. One is the emphasis on least privilege, which suggests Microsoft is trying to avoid a future where agents inherit broad permissions simply because the environment has not been designed carefully. Another is the inclusion of vulnerability management and threat protection, which is a sign that Microsoft expects agents to become part of the security surface rather than something managed separately by AI teams alone. A third is the broader governance layer around who owns the agent, what it can access, and how its behavior can be monitored.

My honest view is that this is one of Microsoft's better recent moves. There is a lot of AI noise in the market, but Agent 365 addresses a real problem. Most organisation's can probably imagine themselves ending up with dozens, then hundreds, of semi-autonomous tools, bots, workflows, and agents over time. Without central governance, that becomes messy very quickly. Agent 365 does not remove the need for process and policy, though it looks like a credible attempt to stop the agent story becoming the next shadow IT problem.



Read More:

[Microsoft Agent 365: The Control Plane for Agents](#)

[Microsoft Agent 365: The control plane for AI agents | Microsoft 365 Blog](#)



AI is becoming a workflow question, not just a prompt question

Another useful way to think about Microsoft's AI direction is that it is becoming more workflow-oriented and less prompt-oriented. Microsoft's wider Frontier Suite and Copilot direction points towards longer-running tasks, agent orchestration, and more embedded business process support, rather than simply smarter chat.

That is where the bigger value probably sits over time. Most companies will not get transformational value from asking Copilot to rewrite emails. They are more likely to see it where AI removes repetitive admin, supports process-heavy teams, or helps orchestrate work across data, documents, and line-of-business systems.

[Read more: Powering Frontier Transformation with Copilot and agents | Microsoft 365 Blog](#)

SECURITY

Security Dashboard for AI

The Security Dashboard for AI is a genuinely worthwhile update. Microsoft announced it in public preview on 13th February 2026, describing it as a unified dashboard that brings together posture and real-time risk signals from Microsoft Defender, Microsoft Entra, and Microsoft Purview. Microsoft says it helps businesses discover agents and AI apps, track AI posture and drift, and correlate risk signals across the wider AI ecosystem.

What matters here is the breadth. Microsoft's documentation says the dashboard covers Microsoft AI services such as Microsoft 365 Copilot, Copilot Studio agents, and Foundry apps and agents, while also supporting visibility across third-party AI applications. If the dashboard had only covered Microsoft-native AI, it would have been a much more limited answer. By pulling in both Microsoft and non-Microsoft AI assets, Microsoft is acknowledging a more realistic environment where approved and unapproved AI services often coexist.

There is another detail here that is easy to miss. Microsoft has framed the dashboard around posture and drift, not only incidents. That is important because it suggests the goal is not simply to alert after something goes wrong, but to help security teams spot when the AI estate is moving away from the desired state. In other words, it is as much a governance capability as a detection one.

From a practical point of view, this matters because many companies are already asking the same questions: where is AI being used, what data is it touching, which agents exist, and are our controls keeping up. The Security Dashboard for AI is not the full answer on its own, though it is one of the stronger signs that Microsoft is taking visibility and control seriously rather than only adding more AI features. My view is that this is one of the more credible parts of Microsoft's current AI push.

SECURITY DASHBOARD FOR AI



Entra
Identity & Access

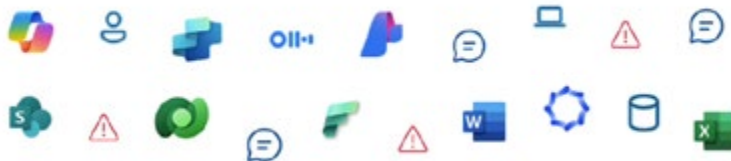


Defender
Threat Protection



Purview
Data Security

AI RISK SIGNALS



[Read More: Security Dashboard for AI – Now Generally Available | Microsoft Community Hub](#)

Secure AI will increasingly depend on Entra, Defender & Purview working together

A broader pattern worth calling out is that Microsoft's AI security story is not really one product. It is an increasingly joined-up combination of Entra for identity and access, Purview for data governance and protection, and Defender for posture, threat, and investigation. That is obvious in the Security Dashboard for AI, but it is also obvious in the way E7 and Agent 365 are positioned.

From an organisational perspective, that means AI readiness is becoming a much more cross-functional issue. The better your data classification, access model, endpoint state, and security operations maturity, the easier AI becomes to adopt safely. I think that is one of the more honest truths in this space, even if it is less exciting than the feature announcements.

A good example is Microsoft's latest Purview messaging, which focuses on discovering sensitive data, applying protection, and investigating data risks as AI use scales. That is useful because it reminds organisation's that safe AI adoption depends just as much on data visibility and policy as it does on the AI tool itself.



DATA

Microsoft Fabric

Microsoft Fabric's March 2026 Feature Summary is packed with updates, and while not every individual item belongs in a customer newsletter, there are a few that are worth real attention. The summary spans governance, data engineering, real-time intelligence, data science, extensibility, and AI, which is another sign that Fabric is becoming more than a niche analytics conversation.

For readers less close to the platform, Fabric is Microsoft's attempt to bring data movement, data engineering, analytics, warehousing, real-time streams, and BI into a more unified service, with OneLake acting as the shared data foundation. In plain terms, it is designed to reduce fragmentation across separate tools and make it easier to move from data ingestion to modelling, reporting, and AI-driven insight in one Microsoft-centric platform.

A few of the March updates are especially telling. Microsoft highlights Outbound Access Protection for Fabric Data Warehouse, Data Warehouse recovery in preview, Direct Lake on OneLake generally available, Translytical Task Flows generally available, TMDL view in web modelling, workspace tags, and workload-management enhancements. These are not especially flashy features, though they are exactly the sort of things that make a platform feel more enterprise-ready over time.

The security angle is especially important. Microsoft has also been highlighting new data protection capabilities in Fabric, and that matters more than many of the lower-level technical announcements. Organisation's increasingly want analytics, reporting, real-time data, and AI to sit closer together, but they also need confidence that data movement and exposure are being controlled properly. Fabric is strongest when it is presented not only as a reporting platform, but as part of a governed data estate.

A couple of additional items are worth a brief mention because they hint at where Microsoft is going. Programmatic Power Query execution supports more repeatable and operationalised data processes. Permission changes for semantic models used by Fabric Data Agents show Microsoft is taking the governance side of AI-connected data access seriously. Private network streaming through Eventstream connectors is also useful for organisation's with tighter network and security requirements.

My honest view is that Fabric is now well past the point where it can be dismissed as Power BI plus some extra bits. The direction of travel is much broader than that. Whether it becomes the right strategic data platform for a given organisation will still depend on their architecture, existing tooling, and skillset, though it is increasingly relevant to any business that wants analytics, data engineering, and AI to sit on a more joined-up Microsoft foundation.

Read More: [Fabric March 2026 Feature Summary | Microsoft Fabric Blog | Microsoft Fabric](#)

Dynamics 365

Microsoft published the 2026 release wave 1 plans on 18th March 2026, covering changes arriving between April and September 2026. The plans span sales, service, finance, supply chain, HR, project operations, commerce, and ERP, with Microsoft positioning the wave as a new era of AI-powered business applications.

For readers less close to Dynamics, that means Microsoft is increasingly treating its business applications as more than systems of record. The direction is towards applications that can surface insight, recommend action, automate low-value work, and support the user across an end-to-end process rather than at a single screen level. That is a more meaningful shift than simply adding another AI summary pane.

The reason this matters is that many organisation's are still forcing teams to work across fragmented systems, repeated data entry, and manual hand-offs. This latest wave is interesting because it continues to push Dynamics towards more operationally intelligent workflows, especially where finance teams, service teams, and operations teams are spending too much time on administration rather than decision-making.

For organisation's, the question should be less what is the new feature list and more where are we still relying on repetitive, cross-system, manually controlled work that Microsoft is now clearly trying to reduce. That is where the Dynamics value conversation becomes more compelling. I also think organisation's should take the release wave format more seriously than they sometimes do, because Microsoft is shipping at a pace where release planning, business ownership, testing, and change readiness are becoming more important.

Read More: [2026 release wave 1 plans for Microsoft Dynamics 365, Microsoft Power Platform, and Copilot Studio offerings – Microsoft Dynamics 365 Blog](#)

Power Platform

Still one of the best ways to create value quickly, though governance is no longer optional

Power Platform remains one of the strongest parts of the Microsoft portfolio for organisations that want visible, practical improvements without waiting for a major platform programme. It is still a very good fit for workflow automation, approvals, forms, light-touch apps, and reducing spreadsheet-led or email-led manual work. What has changed is that Microsoft is now paying much more attention to the governance side of that success.

At its core, Power Platform brings together Power Apps, Power Automate, Power Pages, Copilot Studio, and the surrounding low-code services that allow teams to build apps, automate processes, and create agent-led or workflow-led experiences more quickly than with traditional development alone. That is exactly why it has become so valuable, and also why it can become sprawling if nobody owns the standards.

The clearest example in the current updates is Power Platform inventory, which is now generally available. Microsoft says it gives tenant administrators a unified view of cloud flows, Copilot Studio agent





flows, and Workflows agent workflows across every environment, with connectors, actions, and more usage data on the way. Inventory sounds like an admin feature, though in reality it is a precondition for better lifecycle management, compliance review, and basic operational control.

That matters because a lot of Power Platform estates become difficult not because the tools are weak, but because success spreads faster than governance. Over time, apps are built by different teams, flows are inherited or abandoned, agents appear in pockets, and suddenly the estate is more business-critical than anyone intended. If you do not know what exists, who owns it, and how heavily it is being used, it becomes much harder to support the platform properly.

My view is that Power Platform is still one of the best places for organisations to prove value quickly with Microsoft technology, though it also carries one of the highest risks of hidden sprawl if nobody owns the standards. The most successful estates tend to have just enough governance to keep control without killing momentum: clear ownership, some reusable patterns, visibility across environments, and a sensible review process for what becomes business-critical.

[**Read More:** What's new in Power Platform: March 2026 feature update – Microsoft Power Platform Blog](#)

TEAMS & COLLABORATION

Licensing Changes from the 1st April

Microsoft's latest Teams licensing changes are worth paying attention to, particularly for organisations using shared spaces, managing hybrid working, or delivering larger internal and external events. From 1st April 2026, Microsoft is broadening access to some Microsoft Places capabilities, renaming the old Teams Shared Device licence to Teams Shared Space, and expanding what users with Teams Enterprise can do for town halls and event experiences.

One of the more useful changes is around Teams Shared Space. Microsoft says this licence now supports desk booking, space management, and space analytics, with one licence able to manage up to four shared desks or spaces. For organisations trying to make better use of offices, bookable desks, or shared work areas, that gives Teams a more practical role in day-to-day workplace management.

Microsoft is also expanding what is available for larger events. It says that Teams Enterprise customers will now be able to host town halls with up to 3,000 interactive attendees and 10,000 view-only attendees, with add-on capacity available for even larger view-only events. For organisations running company-wide briefings, customer webinars, or larger online events, that gives more room to scale without immediately moving to separate event platforms.

There is also a wider point here around Microsoft Places. As Microsoft continues to build out hybrid workplace capabilities, these changes suggest it wants more organisations to make use of desk booking, workspace coordination, and office usage insights within the Microsoft tools they already use. That may not be a major change for every organisation, but for those actively managing office attendance and shared environments, it is a useful step.

Taken together, these updates make Teams a little more practical as both a collaboration platform and a workplace management tool. They are not headline-grabbing changes, but they are the sort of licensing adjustments that can make a real difference when reviewing how Teams is being used across the wider organisation.

Read more: [Licensing updates extend access to advanced capabilities in Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Places | Microsoft Community Hub](#)

PLATFORM LIFECYCLE & PLANNING AHEAD

Windows Server 2016 & Windows 10 2016 LTSC Planning

Microsoft has published guidance for businesses planning ahead for the end of support of Windows Server 2016 and Windows 10 2016 LTSC. Microsoft says support for Windows Server 2016 ends on 12th January 2027, while Windows 10 Enterprise 2016 LTSC and Windows 10 IoT Enterprise 2016 LTSC reach end of support on 13th October 2026.

For readers less close to the lifecycle terminology, this matters because end of support means no new security updates, non-security updates, or assisted support in the normal course. Microsoft has confirmed that Extended Security Updates can provide additional time for Windows Server 2016 where organisation's cannot complete upgrades in time, though that should be treated as breathing space rather than the long-term plan.

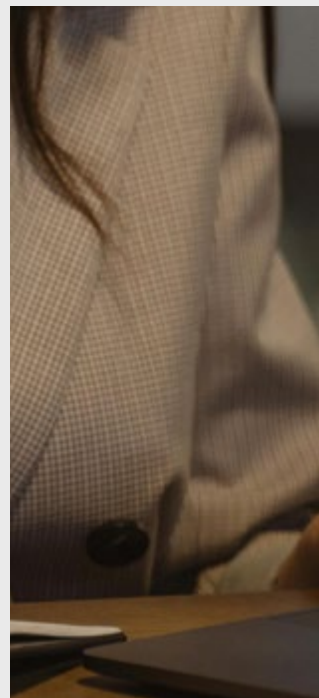
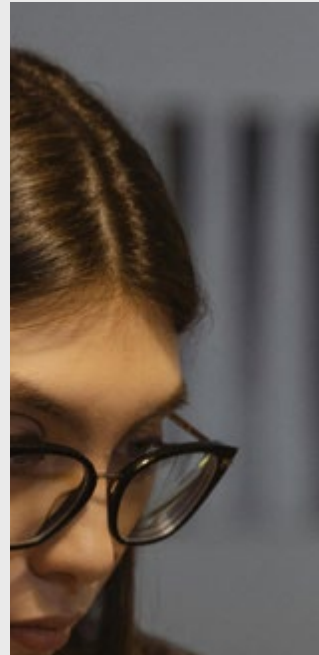
This is a useful planning topic because 2016-era platforms are still present in a lot of environments, especially where legacy applications, specialist devices, or long refresh cycles exist. While those dates can still feel some distance away, the work needed to assess dependencies, test upgrades, confirm application compatibility, and plan migration paths often takes longer than expected. The organisation's that handle this best usually start with discovery and dependency mapping rather than waiting until the dates feel uncomfortable.

If your organisation still has Windows Server 2016 or Windows 10 2016 LTSC in use, now is a good time to start reviewing what is in place and what the right next step looks like. Cybit can help with discovery, dependency mapping, upgrade planning, and broader modernisation discussions to make sure these deadlines are addressed in a controlled and practical way. Reach out to us today.

SharePoint Add-Ins & Azure ACS retirement

Microsoft has confirmed that SharePoint Add-Ins and Azure ACS for SharePoint Online will stop working on 2nd April 2026, with no extension available beyond that date. In simple terms, this affects older SharePoint customisations and app models that were commonly used before Microsoft moved towards more modern approaches such as SharePoint Framework (SPFx) and Microsoft Entra ID.

For organisations less familiar with the older SharePoint model, SharePoint Add-Ins were one of Microsoft's earlier ways of adding custom functionality into SharePoint sites, such as web parts, custom pages, or integrations. Azure ACS was often used behind the scenes to handle authentication and app trust for older SharePoint apps, especially





provider-hosted add-ins and custom applications accessing SharePoint Online. Microsoft is recommending that SharePoint Add-Ins be moved to SPFx where appropriate, and that Azure ACS-based authentication be moved to Microsoft Entra ID.

What makes this important is that many organisations may not realise these older components are still in use. They can sit quietly in the background for years, particularly where SharePoint Online has been customised over time or where older third-party tools were introduced and never fully revisited. In many cases, nothing will appear wrong until the retirement date is reached and the dependency stops working.

Read More: [SharePoint Add-Ins and Azure ACS retirement FAQ | Microsoft Learn](#)

User Training & Adoption

One area that often gets less attention than it should is end-user adoption. Microsoft continues to provide a number of strong resources that organisations can use directly or build into a wider enablement plan. That includes the Microsoft 365 Adoption site, Microsoft 365 Learning Pathways, and dedicated Copilot success resources.

For readers not familiar with these, Microsoft 365 Learning Pathways is a customisable learning portal that organisation's can use to surface guided training content for Microsoft 365 services. The Copilot Success Kit and related adoption resources are designed to help organisation's with launch communications, readiness activity, role-based guidance, and early user enablement. In other words, these are practical adoption tools rather than generic marketing pages.

That matters because a lot of Microsoft investment still underperforms for the same reason: the technology is switched on, but users are not confident in how to use it well, where it fits in their day-to-day work, or what good practice looks like. That is even more true for AI tools. Users do not only need access. They need examples, context, guardrails, and role-based guidance. For many organisation's, a blend of Microsoft's own training content with targeted internal sessions, champion models, and use-case-led workshops is still one of the best ways to improve adoption.

Cybit can also support organisation's that want a more hands-on starting point with Microsoft 365 Copilot. We can provide dedicated Copilot sandbox environments and guided workshops that allow teams to explore how Copilot can support their business in practice, working through real-world scenarios, demonstrations, and use cases in a controlled setting. For anyone still deciding where Copilot fits, this can be a useful way to move from curiosity to a clearer plan. Please speak to your Cybit contact for more details.

Read more:

[Microsoft 365 Adoption – Get Started](#)

[Microsoft 365 Learning Pathways – Microsoft Adoption](#)

CYBIT NEWS

Upcoming Webinars:

You already own Microsoft security – now learn how to make it work.
8th April 2026, at 10am

In this session, we'll cut through the noise and show you exactly how Entra, Intune MDM, Microsoft Defender, and Purview work together to protect your business end-to-end, without unnecessary complexity or cost.

We would also encourage readers to revisit our earlier Copilot agents webinar, which explored what Copilot Agents are, where they fit, and how organisations can start using them around real business processes while keeping the right guardrails in place.

Where Cybit Can

If any of the topics in this edition align with your roadmap, or if they raise questions around licensing, security, AI readiness, data strategy, or Microsoft platform change, please get in touch.

Whether it is reviewing Microsoft 365 licensing, exploring the right route into Copilot, improving governance around Power Platform, strengthening data protection, planning around end of support, or helping users get more value from the tools you already own, Cybit can help through a mix of advisory, delivery, and managed services.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter McLeavery is a Solutions Architect at Cybit and one of our leading Microsoft specialists, with deep expertise across Microsoft 365, Azure, Copilot, and the broader modern workplace ecosystem.

With over a decade of hands-on experience helping organisations modernise their environments, Peter is known for translating complex technology into clear, practical solutions that deliver measurable value. He works closely with IT and business leaders to optimise their Microsoft licensing, simplify their architecture, and unlock capabilities they already own but haven't fully leveraged. Recently, he has been focused on helping customers prepare for the shift toward AI-enabled operations — including Copilot readiness, data governance, automation, and secure-by-design configuration.

Peter regularly leads Cybit's customer education sessions, webinars, and advisor workshops, where his blend of technical depth and real-world pragmatism makes him a trusted voice. Whether he's guiding organisations through Microsoft 365 E7 planning, building proof-of-concepts in Copilot Studio, or improving day-to-day workplace efficiency, Peter is passionate about helping customers turn Microsoft technology into meaningful, scalable outcomes.

Contact Peter on peter.mcleavery@cybit.com

Links:**Webinar
Registration:**

[You already own Microsoft security – now learn how to make it work.](#)

**Copilot Agents
Recording:**

[Make AI work for you: Copilot agents](#)



Peter McLeavery
Solutions Architect

OUR PROMISE

BUILD TOGETHER. DELIVER TOGETHER. SUCCEED TOGETHER.