CYBIT

Microsoft Solutions Partner

MICROSOFT NEWSLETTER, OCTOBER 2026

Copilot: what is new, and what is worth your time.

Microsoft Newsletter

PART ONE OF THREE

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OCTOBER 2026

Copilot and Microsoft 365

Part one of three. The changes your users will notice first.

Copilot is gaining capabilities that affect everyday work rather than pilot projects: analysis in Excel, reusable instructions in SharePoint and a wider choice of models behind the same interface.

Each item below includes what it does, what it depends on and a sensible first step. Parts two and three cover data protection and identity, then the platform, data and the October deadlines.

IN THIS PART

- Python assisted analysis in Excel.
- Reusable Copilot skills in SharePoint.
- A wider choice of models, and what to check before enabling one.
- Authoritative sites in Copilot Search.
- Brand assets and the Microsoft 365 Brand Centre.
- Controls for external meeting bots in Teams.

SECTION 01 — PRODUCTIVITY AND ADOPTION

Microsoft 365 and Copilot

More capable analysis in Excel

If you spend part of each month cleaning up exports, checking figures and preparing reports, the latest Excel update is worth a look. Edit with Copilot can now use Python to carry out analysis and put the results back into your workbook.

That opens up tasks such as statistical analysis, simulations and more advanced visualisations. A sensible first exercise would be a report you already understand well. Ask Copilot to analyse it, inspect the approach it takes and compare the result with your existing work. You will quickly get a feel for where it saves time and where your own knowledge is still doing the work.

June's edition covered Copilot's editing capabilities in Excel. Python assisted analysis adds another option for working with the data itself. Anyone using the output for a management or financial decision should be able to explain the assumptions behind it.

Read more: **Release notes for Microsoft 365 Copilot, Microsoft Learn**

Reusable skills in SharePoint (preview)

Writing a good prompt takes some thought. If several people carry out the same document review, asking each person to build their own instructions introduces another source of inconsistency.

Copilot skills in SharePoint let you save instructions for a recurring task and reuse them. A team could create a skill to review a project document against an agreed checklist, identify missing information or produce a standard summary. The documented capability works within the content and permissions available to the user.

We would start with one task that already has a clear process. Give someone responsibility for maintaining the skill, try it against a few representative documents and review the results with the people who normally do the work. A well defined review is a useful place to begin.

Read more: **Extend Copilot in SharePoint with skills, Microsoft Learn**

More model choice within Copilot

Microsoft is widening the choice of AI models available through Copilot. The options depend on which product you are using, with some releases still rolling out or limited to the Frontier programme.

THE LATEST FRONTIER AND IN-HOUSE MODELS

Microsoft AI

- MAI-Image-2.5 Flash and Pro (PowerPoint, OneDrive, Bing)
- MAI-Code-1.1-Flash (GitHub Copilot)

Anthropic

- Opus 5 (M365 Copilot Chat, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Cowork, Copilot Studio, Scout)
- Sonnet 5 (M365 Copilot Chat, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Cowork, Copilot Studio, Scout)
- Fable 5.1 (Cowork)

OpenAI

- GPT-6 Astra (Cowork, Scout)
- GPT-5.6 Quick and Think Deeper (M365 Copilot Chat, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Copilot Studio)
- GPT-5.6 Sol and Terra (Cowork)

Plus Mistral Medium 3.5 in Copilot Studio, and Grok 4.6 through the Frontier programme in Word, Excel and PowerPoint. The announced Grok rollout excludes the UK, EU and EFTA.

For customers, this creates more room to test which model suits a task. Compare the available options on work your team knows well, looking at accuracy, sources, speed and cost. Check the provider's data processing terms and the controls available to your administrators before enabling it. A model's European origin alone does not establish where your organisation's data will be processed.

Read more: Claude Opus 5 | Claude Sonnet 5 | Claude Fable 5.1 | GPT-5.6 | GPT-6 Astra | Microsoft AI models | Microsoft and Mistral | Grok rollout

Helping people find official content in SharePoint

An old policy saved in a project folder can look convincing when it appears in a search result. SharePoint Authoritative Sites give administrators a way to identify the organisation's official sources within Copilot Search.

Designated sites receive an organisation label in the search experience. This could help staff recognise the approved HR policy library, finance guidance or central IT support content. Access continues to depend on the user's permissions.

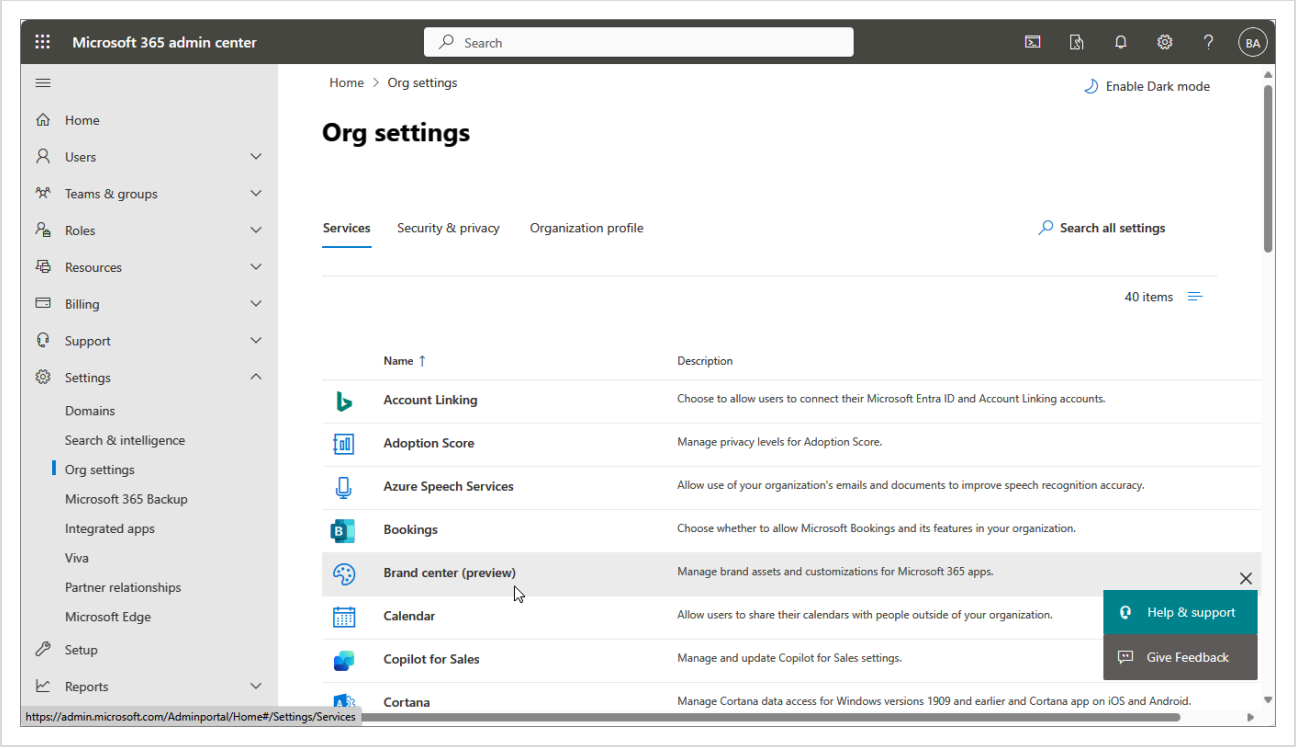
Choose sites with an owner who keeps the content current. The designation identifies an official source. The people responsible for it still need to remove obsolete documents and resolve conflicting guidance. Configuration currently uses PowerShell or CSOM, and the relevant Copilot and SharePoint Advanced Management prerequisites apply.

Read more: SharePoint Authoritative Sites, Microsoft Learn

Keeping brand assets consistent

Microsoft 365 Brand Centre is worth revisiting if teams struggle to find the correct logos, fonts or templates. SharePoint's established Brand Center provides a central place to manage organisational brand assets. Recent Copilot updates also allow brand kits to be created from a brand guideline document.

If your organisation has several versions of its logo, old templates and fonts being passed around by email, give the underlying assets some attention first. Agree which material is current and who maintains it. That gives staff, and the tools they use, a dependable starting point.



BRAND CENTER APPEARS UNDER SETTINGS, ORG SETTINGS, SERVICES IN THE MICROSOFT 365 ADMIN CENTRE

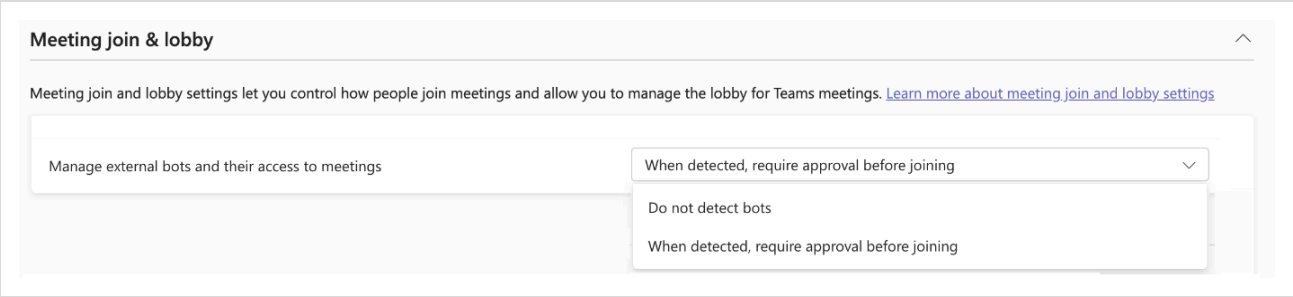
Read more: SharePoint Brand Center, Microsoft Learn

Who can bring a meeting bot into the conversation

External note taking and transcription tools can be helpful. People attending a meeting need to understand when another service is recording or processing the discussion.

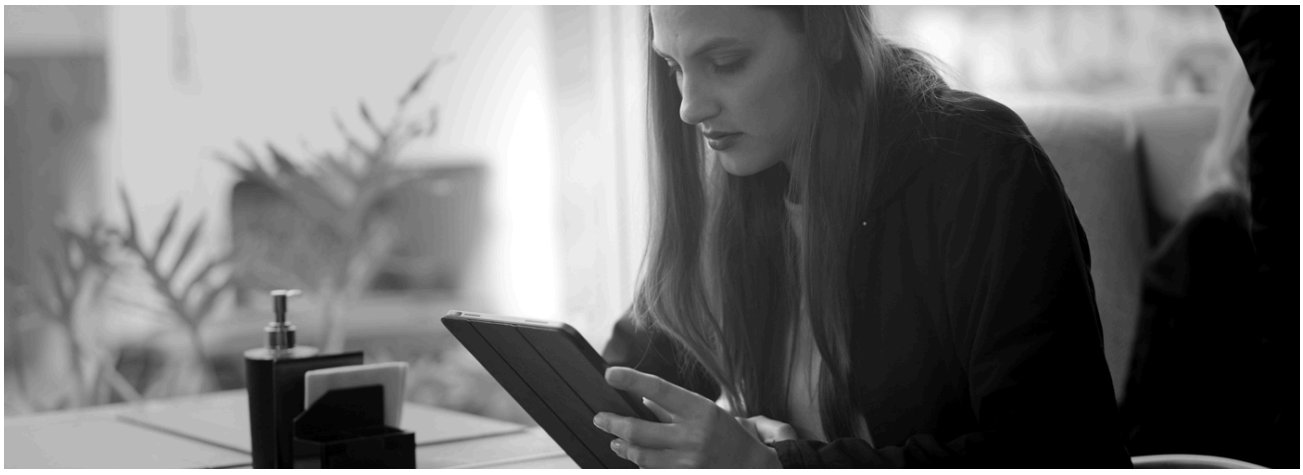
Teams provides controls to identify detected external bots and require explicit admission through the lobby. Detection has limitations, so staff awareness remains part of the process.

Review the meeting policies used for customer conversations and sensitive internal discussions. Decide which tools are approved, who can admit them and what participants need to be told. It is a straightforward policy discussion that is much easier to have before a confidential meeting is recorded.



MEETING JOIN AND LOBBY: EXTERNAL BOTS CAN BE REQUIRED TO SEEK APPROVAL BEFORE JOINING

Read more: **Manage external bots and their access to meetings, Microsoft Learn**



AGREE WHO CAN ADMIT A RECORDING TOOL BEFORE THE MEETING, NOT DURING IT

Where Cybit can support

If any of these updates affect your plans, speak to your Cybit account manager. We can help you work through the licensing and technical detail, identify the systems or users affected and agree what needs to happen next.

If you are unsure where to begin, bring us the business process or system that is causing the most difficulty. We can start there.

This is one part of our October Microsoft newsletter. The other parts follow over the coming weeks, and the full edition is available on request.

OUR PROMISE

Build together. Deliver together. Succeed together.

CYBIT

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter McLeavery

SOLUTIONS ARCHITECT

Translating complex technology into practical outcomes

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 have not yet fully used. 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 is 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

GET IN TOUCH

Equinox House, Silver Fox Way
Cobalt Business Park
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE27 0QJ

03300 577350
hello@cybit.com
cybit.com

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