CYBIT

Microsoft Solutions Partner

MICROSOFT NEWSLETTER, OCTOBER 2026

The platform, the data, and the calendar.

Microsoft Newsletter

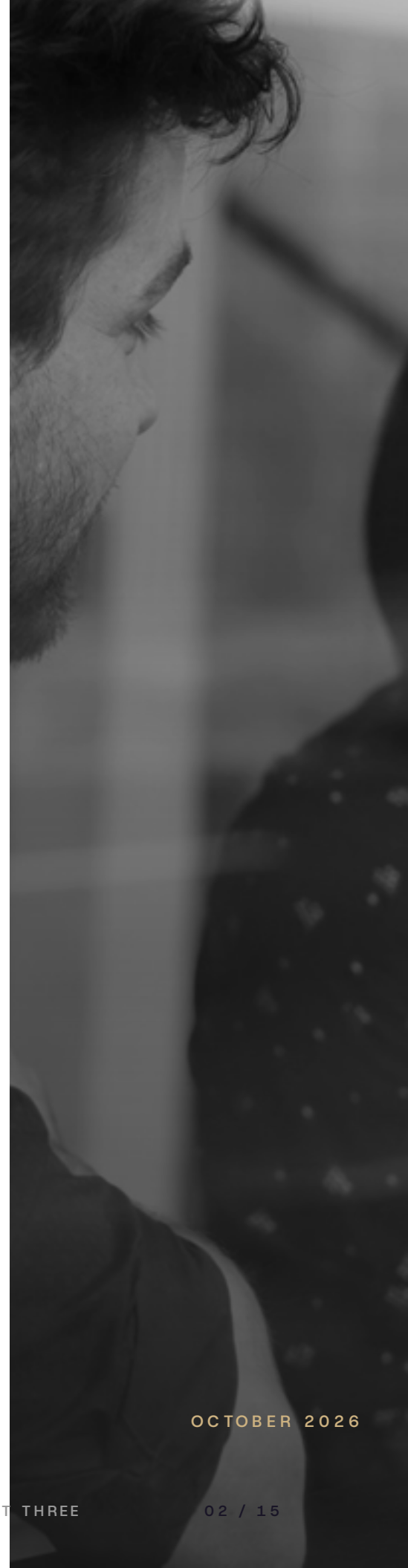
PART THREE OF THREE

CONTENTS

Inside this edition

	Azure, data and the deadlines	**3**
01	**Azure**	**4**
	Checking the resilience of an Azure environment	5
	Private connectivity between Azure and AWS	5
	Windows App endpoints for Azure Virtual Desktop	5
	Azure Copilot Troubleshooting Agent	6
	Agentless migration of SMB file shares	6
02	**Fabric, data agents and Power BI**	**8**
	Assessing SQL databases for a Fabric migration	9
	Data agents gain more ways to answer questions	9
	Improvements for report readers and authors	9
03	**Platform lifecycle and planning ahead**	**11**
	October and November checks	12
	Into 2027	13
	Where Cybit can support	**13**
	About the author	**15**

Section start pages listed right.



OCTOBER 2026

Azure, data and the deadlines

Part three of three. What to plan, and what is running out of time.

This part covers the developments worth factoring into next year's plans, across Azure resilience, multicloud connectivity, Fabric and Power BI.

It closes with the support calendar. Several of these dates appeared in August. They are here again because the remaining window for action is now short, and each one needs a named owner.

IN THIS PART

- Availability zone and recovery reviews.
- Private connectivity between Azure and AWS.
- Windows App endpoints for Azure Virtual Desktop.
- Fabric migration assessment and data agents.
- Power BI updates, including an October desktop check.
- The October, November and January deadlines.

SECTION 01 — CLOUD PLATFORM

Azure

Checking the resilience of an existing Azure environment

An availability zone review is a sensible exercise when an Azure environment has grown beyond its original design. Zones are separate locations within a region, and the resilience you achieve depends on how each service is deployed and configured.

Choose a business critical application and trace its dependencies. Look at the application servers, identity services, network path and data layer. Check what would happen if a zone became unavailable, how the application would recover and who would be responsible for the recovery work.

Also review backup and regional recovery requirements. They address their own failure scenarios and need to be tested. A recovery plan becomes much more credible once someone has walked through it and recorded the outcome.

> Want a second pair of eyes on a resilience review? Speak to your Cybit account manager and we will scope it with you.

Private connectivity between Azure and AWS (public preview)

Azure Multicloud Interconnect for AWS is worth following if your systems or data are spread across both platforms. It provides a new option for private connectivity between them.

The preview has important planning constraints. Microsoft's published region list does not currently include a UK region, and the preview has a 1 Gbps limit and no SLA. Those details need to be considered alongside data location, traffic volumes and costs on both sides. For now, customers with a suitable non production use case can use the preview to assess how it might fit a future design.

Read more: **What is Azure Multicloud Interconnect?** | **Availability and limits**

Windows App client side endpoints for Azure Virtual Desktop

Beginning in early October 2026, Windows App will start using three new wildcard fully qualified domain names for client side service traffic to Azure Virtual Desktop. These domains are already included in the cloud side connectivity requirements.

If your organisation applies network controls to devices running Windows App, you must allow these endpoints before activation. If the endpoints are not reachable, users may experience sign in and connection failures.

This is a client side change for Windows App and is separate from the previous cloud side domain update. Organisations that have already completed the cloud side update should still review proxy, firewall, VPN, DNS filtering and Secure Web Gateway policies that

> If these endpoints are unavailable, blocked, or inspected in a way that interrupts the connection, users may experience failures during sign in, resource discovery, connection or an active session.

Read more: **Required FQDNs and endpoints for Azure Virtual Desktop** | **Unified cloud.microsoft domain for Microsoft 365 apps**

Azure Copilot Troubleshooting Agent

The Azure Copilot Troubleshooting Agent is now generally available. It is a built in Azure Copilot capability that helps customers investigate and resolve operational issues faster.

Available through both Azure Copilot and Support and Troubleshooting in the Azure portal, it brings troubleshooting insights, operational context and recommended actions into a single experience, which shortens the route from detection to resolution.

Read more: **Azure Copilot announces general availability of the Troubleshooting Agent**

Agentless migration of SMB file shares to Azure Files (public preview)

Azure Storage Mover now supports agentless migration of on premises SMB file shares to Azure Files (SMB) in public preview. You can move file data from Windows Server or NAS shares into Azure without deploying, registering or maintaining a migration agent on premises.

With agentless migration, the Storage Mover service connects directly to your SMB share over an existing private connection, either VPN or ExpressRoute, and copies data to the destination Azure file share. Source credentials are stored securely in Azure Key Vault, and Storage Mover's managed identities handle access to both the source secrets and the target share. Configure source and target endpoints, create a job, and start the copy from the Azure portal or Azure CLI.

Agentless SMB migration joins Storage Mover's existing agent based paths for SMB and NFS sources, giving businesses more flexibility to modernise file storage.

Read more: **Migrate on premises SMB file shares to Azure Files using agentless migration, Microsoft Learn**

RESILIENCE IS A DESIGN DECISION, NOT A DEFAULT

SECTION 02 — DATA AND ANALYTICS

Fabric, data agents and Power BI

Assessing SQL databases for a Fabric migration

Fabric Migration Assistant for SQL databases reached general availability in August. It helps assess and prepare database schemas for migration, with data movement supported through Copy Jobs.

If you have an older SQL application under review, this provides a useful way to explore suitability. Start by establishing which database features and integrations the application relies on. Involve its supplier, check the migration findings and test a representative workload before deciding on the target platform.

The tool can support the assessment. The application still needs a clear support position, a workable cutover plan and a tested recovery route.

Read more: **Migrate SQL Server to SQL database in Microsoft Fabric using Fabric Migration Assistant**

Data agents gain more ways to answer questions

Following August's Microsoft 365 Copilot coverage, Fabric Data Agents can now be integrated into Copilot Studio through Fabric IQ Data MCP. This gives organisations another way to bring analytical answers into their own agents.

Advanced DAX generation is also in preview. It allows a data agent to work through a more detailed approach to querying a semantic model before answering.

Pick a small set of business questions with known answers when testing either capability. Include questions that should return different results for different users, so you can assess access controls as well as accuracy.

Read more: **Advanced DAX generation for semantic models in Fabric data agents (preview)**

Activator and business events (preview)

Fabric Activator can publish a structured business event into Real-Time hub when a condition in the data is met. That event can then be used by other processes.

For example, a fall in stock below an agreed threshold could prompt a replenishment workflow. Agree who receives the event, what action should follow and how repeated alerts will be handled. The business process needs an owner throughout the trial.

Read more: **What is Fabric Activator?** | **Business events overview in Fabric Real-Time hub**

Improvements for report readers and authors

The latest Power BI updates include modern visual defaults and theme customisation, a generally available date picker slicer and comments within organisational apps. Report owners also gain more selective controls over semantic model refreshes, including schema, data and individual tables.

There is a governance detail to review too. Copilot summaries can use visuals hidden behind display bookmarks. Row level and object level security continue to apply. Hiding a visual should therefore never be your access control mechanism.

Take a familiar report through the updated experience with one of its regular readers. Check whether the date selection is easier to use, whether the theme remains consistent and whether the summary answers the questions people normally ask.

> OCTOBER CHECK
>
> Power BI Desktop releases from March 2026 and earlier lose the ability to save and share reports through OneDrive and SharePoint. Confirm that your report authors are running a current supported version before the end of the month.

Read more: **See what's new in Power BI, Microsoft Learn**

REPORTING PEOPLE CAN ACT ON WITHOUT CHECKING IT TWICE

SECTION 03 — DATES AND DECISIONS

Platform lifecycle and planning ahead

October and November checks

Several of these dates appeared in August. They are back here because the remaining window for action is now short. Confirm the position against your own inventory and give each outstanding item an owner.

DATE	CHANGE	WHAT TO CONFIRM
1 October	Legacy Entra risk policies retire	User risk and sign in risk controls have moved into Conditional Access and been tested
12 October	Defender XDR records DLP alerts as behaviours	The monitoring approach is agreed with your security team or provider
13 October	Windows 11 24H2 Home and Pro, and Windows 10 Enterprise 2016 LTSB, reach the end of standard updates	Affected devices have an upgrade or replacement plan
October	Office LTSC 2021 reaches end of support	The replacement plan, including application, add in and document compatibility testing
October	Final ESU year for Windows Server 2012 and 2012 R2 ends	Remaining systems have an agreed migration or retirement plan
End of October	Final Exchange Server 2016 and 2019 ESU period ends	Progress towards Exchange Online or a supported Exchange Server release, including application and device dependencies
3 November	The memberOf rule operator is retired	The replacement work described in the identity section is complete
November	Windows 11 23H2 Enterprise and Education reach end of updates	Centrally managed devices and those used by remote staff
November	Support ends for .NET 8 and .NET 9	Application owners have a supported upgrade path agreed with developers or vendors

> Installing a newer .NET runtime on its own does not establish that an application has been migrated successfully. Ask the application owner for evidence of testing, not just the installed version.

Into 2027

12 January 2027: Windows Server 2016 reaches end of extended support. If a migration project is still waiting for approval, factor in testing and the year end change calendar when agreeing its delivery date.

Approval in November or December, with delivery in the new year, is a realistic route. Approval in January is not.

CYBIT'S VIEW

Most of the dates above have been in the diary for a while. What separates the organisations that handle them well is not awareness, it is ownership. Every item on this list needs a named person, a decision and a date, even if that decision is to accept the risk for another quarter.

If you would like a second opinion on where your own estate sits against this calendar, we can run through it with you and mark the items that carry real operational risk.

EVERY DATE ON THE LIST NEEDS A NAME AGAINST 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.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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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.

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