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AI demand boosts Microsoft profits

FINANCIALS | Strong earnings reported on same day Azure cloud glitch depresses stock.

By ALEX HALVERSON
Seattle Times business reporter

Microsoft beat Wall Street expectations on Wednesday, delivering financial results that showed steady demand even as problems with its Azure cloud computing platform ground websites and email accounts around the globe

to a halt.

Azure outages began popping up Wednesday morning, hours before the Redmond-based software maker reported almost \$77.7 billion in revenue for its first fiscal quarter of 2026, which ran from July through September. Analysts were expecting \$75.3

billion in revenue. On top of that, the company brought in \$27.7 billion in profit.

Despite a strong financial showing, Microsoft's stock price didn't recover from the slip caused by the Azure outage.

In a news release, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and CFO Amy Hood both chalked up the results to increased demand for the company's cloud

services and its AI-powered Copilot models.

"Our planet-scale cloud and AI factory, together with Copilots across high value domains, is driving broad diffusion and real-world impact," Nadella said. "It's why we continue to increase our investments in AI across both capital and talent to meet the massive

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BOEING, Starbucks earnings > Business A11

Differing visions compete in race for city attorney

By LAUREN GIRGIS
Seattle Times staff reporter

In the race for Seattle city attorney, both candidates argue their opponent stands to take Seattle backward.

Current City Attorney Ann Davison has focused on cracking down on low-level crimes and pushing Seattle City Council for laws that keep people charged with certain crimes out of certain parts of the city. That approach has made her a target by those who see her leadership as a wash, rinse, repeat of prior policies that have done little to quell the behavior they are designed to discourage.

Her challenger, former federal prosecutor Erika Evans, has called these "policies of the past." But Davison said the more liberal approach Evans is campaigning

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Ann Davison



Erika Evans

Mold in your rental? You might have to clean it up, not the landlord

By ALEXIS WEISEND
Seattle Times business reporter

It's cozy season — a time when people keep out the chill by shutting windows, curling up on the couch with a steaming mug of tea and switching on a space heater. But that can invite an unwanted house guest — mold.

Mold is a common problem in Washington, where rainy weather creates the ideal conditions for spores to grow and thrive. If it appears in your home, it needs to be cleaned up quickly before it gets out of control. But in rental housing, whose responsibility is it to clean it up — landlords or renters?

In Washington, it's complicated.

The state does not have a specific mandate that landlords need to remove mold in rental housing. In fact, landlords don't even need to disclose existing mold in rental housing to a new tenant.

The onus is mostly on tenants to prove they didn't cause mold — which can be challenging, lawyers say.

Generally, if plumbing or structural leaks cause the mold, the landlord is required to fix the leak. If condensation causes the mold, it's up to the tenant to clean the mold and ventilate the housing, such as turning on the fan in the bathroom, using a dehumidifier or opening windows or doors.

No part of Washington law

See > **MOLD, A6**

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KEN LAMBERT / THE SEATTLE TIMES

People take a closer look at Beta Technologies' electric passenger plane, named ALIA, on Tuesday at Boeing Field in Seattle.

Electric aircraft maker brings ALIA to Boeing Field for a spin

FLYING | Company tours 'conventional' plane while it develops a craft in the race to roll out air taxis.

By LAUREN ROSENBLATT
Seattle Times business reporter

As air taxis creep closer to reality, Beta Technologies is touring its electric aircraft around the country.

The Vermont-based manufacturer is one of several companies working on electric vertical takeoff and landing, or eVTOL, aircraft as part of a broad movement to find more efficient and environmentally sustainable options for air travel.

eVTOLs are battery operated and take off like a helicopter. The companies building them promise lower costs and reduced carbon emissions but have yet to receive

certification from the Federal Aviation Administration to fly with passengers.

Beta, hoping to seek some regulatory approval as soon as next year, is competing with California-based Archer Aviation, which has promised air taxis at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics, and Boeing-backed Wisk Aero, which plans to be certified and flying in the U.S. by 2030 and in Australia by the 2032 Olympics held there.

Joby Aviation, another California-based competitor, has partnered with Delta Air Lines to bring eVTOLs to commercial service and to the Department of Defense for military applications.

Beta is working on an eVTOL but, in an effort to speed regulatory approval, it is also developing a "conventional" takeoff and landing aircraft, a smaller, electric version of traditional commercial planes.

As it gears up to seek FAA certification as soon as next year, Beta is taking its conventional model around the country, introducing it to regional airports and government officials.

On Tuesday, it stopped at Seattle's Boeing Field, carrying forward the region's legacy of aviation "firsts," said Dave Decoteau, deputy director of King County International Airport-Boeing Field.

"We're also leading the way here in environmental sustainability, which falls right in line with Beta's technology," Decoteau said, pointing to the airport's investment in

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After deadly airstrikes, ceasefire resumes in Gaza

By JOSH BOAK AND WAFAA SHURFA
The Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — Israel's military said Wednesday that the ceasefire was back on in Gaza after it carried out heavy airstrikes overnight across the Palestinian territory that killed 104 people, including 66 women and children, according to local health officials.

The strikes, the deadliest since the ceasefire began on Oct. 10, marked the most serious challenge to the tenuous truce to date.

The bombardment pointed to Israel's readiness to strike hard at what it says are Hamas violations of the ceasefire deal. Meanwhile the group denies it is responsible and blames Israel for violations.



ABDEL KAREEM HANA / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Displaced Palestinians inspect the damage after an Israeli army strike on their tent camp in Deir al-Balah, Gaza Strip, on Wednesday.

After it announced the restoration of the ceasefire, the Israeli military said it carried out another airstrike in northern Gaza, targeting what it called a site where weapons were being stored for an imminent attack. Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City said it received two bodies from the strike.

The latest violence puts new strains on American pressure to keep the ceasefire on track. U.S. President Donald Trump defended Israel's strikes but also insisted the escalation won't wreck the truce.

Israel said its overnight strikes were in retaliation for the shooting and killing of an Israeli soldier in Rafah, the southernmost city in Gaza. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also said Hamas violat-

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