INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the utilities edition of Inform where we aim to share our thoughts on current issues affecting the utilities market as well as demonstrate how our Toughbook and Toughpad products have enhanced efficiency for professionals and engineers in these sectors.

We also want to take this opportunity to introduce Paul Davidson, the Utilities Sector Manager. Paul has been at Panasonic for over 10 years, and thoroughly enjoys working closely with customers within this sector, while also collaborating with Japan to identify innovative solutions to satisfy the complex requirements of such a fast moving and exciting industry.

TRANSFORMING THE WAY UTILITIES WORK

Mobile working in the utilities sector presents its own unique challenges.

There’s the need to give your field staff access to digital information, whilst carrying out inspection and maintenance in remote or difficult locations. Equally, you must ensure their working conditions are safe and secure, without overlooking an ever-growing demand for efficient asset management and the ability to work where power sources are unavailable and the elements are a constant enemy.

That’s where Toughbook and Toughpad, equipped with Intel® Core™ i5 vPro™ processors, come into their own.

Thanks to world-class connectivity, performance, portability and unrivalled durability, they’re enabling professionals in the utilities sector to achieve far more in the field than ever before. Paperwork is being rendered unnecessary and challenging weather conditions such as rain, snow or bright sunlight, don’t hamper progress or cause unnecessary downtime.

Quite simply, Toughbook and Toughpad devices are helping utilities providers become more productive, more efficient and more profitable.

What we’d like to show you now is how Panasonic can work with you.

Read on for some real examples of how Toughbook and Toughpad notebook and tablets have transformed the way our customers work and discover how you can achieve this too.

Thanks for reading and please send any comments to:
paul.davidson@eu.panasonic.com
REALISING THE GIFT OF TIME

TIME FOR A TRUE ENTERPRISE-CLASS TABLET?

In today's increasingly service driven economy, an organisation's greatest asset – and cost – is in its workforce and their time. Optimising this time is at the heart of an organisation's operational strategy.

VDC estimates that mobile workers, one billion large in 2013, is the fastest growing segment of the workforce – mobile solutions that connect these workers to one another and with the customers they are supporting can substantially enhance their workflow.

The value of these mobile solutions is in their gift of time – both from a workforce productivity and multiplier perspective and also in their ability to provide workers the time to drive more engaging customer interactions. Although the variety of mobile form factors is only expanding and there is no single form factor that will meet every field worker's needs, it is clear that the tablet form factor and its elegant balance of portability and productivity is evolving into a highly capable and impactful field mobile solution.

Enterprise and government organisations are validating tablet solutions with over 80% of FORTUNE 500 organisations currently deploying or testing tablets for their mobile workers. However, in today's consumer influenced mobile IT landscape, what defines a strong enterprise tablet?

How might enterprise needs vary by mobile worker function, especially when considering the unique requirements among frontline mobile workers such as field service?

From exposure to inclement environmental conditions, to specialised I/O requirements and strict security support, how are these needs being met? Which mobile OS is most suitable for enterprise mobile applications where reliability, application sustainability and security are paramount?

The fact is there is not a "one size fits all" tablet solution and decisions should focus on identifying the solution that provides seamless time to value while balancing upfront costs with ongoing cost of ownership and support.

VDC Research was commissioned by Panasonic to conduct research among enterprise mobile IT decision makers and software developers. To support the research VDC Research fielded a survey that was completed by 186 qualified respondents. The respondents consisted of individuals with direct experience and responsibilities for enterprise mobile solution design and application development either for their organisation or their organisation’s clients.
TABLETS: THE EVOLVING PC FORM FACTOR

Over the next three years, we are expected to experience an explosion in tablet adoption, with shipments reaching almost 400 million tablets by 2016. Of those tablets, approximately 39% is either going to be directly issued by enterprise organisations or supported through a BYOD programme.

Among enterprise IT decision makers evaluating solutions for frontline mobile workers, of the organisations that either deployed or planned to deploy tablets to their workforce, 31% were looking at these mobile devices as a notebook replacement and 20% as a handheld replacement.

Equally important is the fact that for organisations with mobile frontline workers, the tablet is being evaluated to support and mobilise entirely new workflows that had previously been supported with manual processes.

For many organisations, deploying tablets is the catalyst for a broader initiative to review and adjust existing workflows to identify opportunities to streamline and improve processes - improving not only productivity but also the quality of service provided by these mobile workers.
DEFINING THE ENTERPRISE TABLET

So what characterises a good enterprise tablet for frontline field workers? Capabilities such as tablet reliability and stability, robust security and device management and strong lifecycle support are as important as many of the technical features.

Many mobile enterprise workers are using tablets in harsh environmental conditions that their tablets need to be able to withstand. From extreme temperatures, to use with gloved hands or in wet conditions to high altitude exposure, these all represent daily conditions of many mobile workers. Ensuring that all of these factors – from technical to environmental and support – are taken into consideration are essential when evaluating and selecting tablets for enterprise use.

The research illustrates that the top four tablet requirements for enterprise users are battery life, reliability and security features, ahead of price competitiveness.

KNOW YOUR FIELD WORKER’S ENVIRONMENT

One of the most important aspects when considering field mobile solutions is the environment within which these devices will be used.

ENVIRONMENTS

Most common to frontline mobile workers:

- **DIRECT SUNLIGHT %**
- **GLOVED HANDS %**
- **WET CONDITIONS %**

**TABLET REQUIREMENTS**

The top four from IT managers:

- **RELIABILITY** (28%)
- **SECURITY** (23%)
- **PRICE** (21%)
- **BATTERY** (30%)
BUSINESS CONSEQUENCES OF TABLET SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Workforce productivity benefits in excess of 40% and customer satisfaction and loyalty improvements average 30% as a result of the adoption of well-designed mobile solutions. However, failure of tablets in the field can have the opposite effect. The consequence of failure of tablets can result in an average loss of productivity of 128 minutes.

POTENTIAL HIDDEN COSTS OF TABLET SOLUTIONS

For frontline mobile applications, the premium for reliability cannot be understated. Each percentage point increase in tablet failure can result in a 5% increase in cost of ownership. The additional support costs for consumer tablets in the work place was also pronounced with issues identified such as reliability, battery performance, management, security, application development, support for enterprise functionality and accessories lifecycle management.

MOBILE WORKFORCES USING TABLETS

SEE AN AVERAGE INCREASE OF

30% CUSTOMER LOYALTY
40% PRODUCTIVITY

DEVICE FAILURE
AND TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP

DEVICE FAILURE
↑ 1%
TCO
5%↑
INCREASE

TABLET FAILURE
COSTS WORKERS AN AVERAGE OF
128 minutes DOWNTIME

TABLET SUPPORT COSTS
ON AVERAGE

90% OF TCO
62% OF TCO

CLICK HERE TO SEE OUR RANGE OF WHITEPAPERS
THE MOVE TO ENTERPRISE MOBILITY AT SCOTTISHPOWER

Utility providers face a variety of regulatory and operational challenges on a daily basis and ScottishPower Energy Networks (SPEN) is no exception. It must balance meeting regulatory requirements with delivering service excellence to its 3,500,000 customers, while ensuring that the business is run in a responsible, safe and sustainable way.

As part of the ScottishPower Group, SPEN delivers energy through its network of 30,000 substations, 40,000km of overhead lines (the equivalent of once around the globe) and 65,000km of underground cables. Ensuring supply to their customers requires these assets to be maintained and working properly.

To help meet this challenge SPEN decided to innovate through the use of mobile computer technology in the field.

Ten years ago, SPEN formed a relationship with Sigma Seven Limited, a specialist field systems supplier (a relationship that persists to this day) and started working with their GeoField products.

SPEN’s engineers use Toughbook notebooks and tablets in the field and on initial adoption of GeoField, the focus was on mobilising the mapping and asset data held in the enterprise GIS. However, once in the hands of the field staff the potential business benefits of mobilisation became clear. Specific job types were identified for deployment, including providing job quotations on the customer’s doorstep and creating wayleave agreements in the field to allow vegetation to be cleared from the power lines.

“A lot of the work we do is out in the field – it seemed obvious that if we could get better information to the field engineers then it would make their job easier while giving the enterprise better information and improve the quality of the data we hold on our assets.”

Dave Clarke, Business Systems Manager, SPEN
WORKFLOWS

These early successes focused attention on increasing the use of mobile technology within SPEN. GeoField provided a platform to integrate the office systems and a framework where additional job types can be added to the portfolio of tasks. This created the concept of workflows, bringing together the data and functionality that the engineers required in a task-specific manner, while also providing flexibility and scalability.

The workflow concept rapidly increased the number of tasks that could be undertaken in the field, including contractor audit; substation inspection; and control of the Medium Voltage Network.

Also, workflows can be tailored to suit each functional group of field workers, e.g. tree cutters, excavation teams, project coordinators or asset inspectors. In this way the business can ensure that the field staff follow the business process, and yet allows flexibility in how the process is delivered.

SPEN also introduced a Third Party Damage workflow. Like other utilities, many power interruptions are as a result of damage caused by third parties digging up the power cables. The party causing the damage is held responsible for the cost of the repair, and this cost in most cases is passed on to the third parties’ insurance company. Most insurance companies will contest the claim, citing insufficient or inaccurate information to support such claims. The introduction of the Third Party Damage workflow changes that as it ensures that the field-captured data is always complete and accurate, and includes supporting detail such as sketches, photographs, and even the signature of the site representative; removing the opportunity for the claim for damages to be contested.

THE SMART APPROACH

The explosion of the use of smartphones provides SPEN with the opportunity to embrace location-based information and job management to an even broader user population and supports the introduction into areas of the business where the field user is faced with more time-critical and safety-related decisions.

SPEN’s most recent projects encompass near real-time applications, including Incident Management and Storm Response. Information in near real time is the key allowing decisions to be made on the most effective remedial actions together with the ability to keep the customer better informed as to the situation and likely restoration time.

Guy Jefferson, Operations Director, SPEN said: “Customers rightly demand more from us in terms of information and status. They live in a joined up world and expect the same from us. The investments that we have made and continue to make in mobile systems, together with our relationship with Sigma Seven, provides a flexible platform to deliver better information flow throughout the business, and is a cornerstone in meeting our financial, engineering, statutory and social responsibilities moving forward.”

The investment made by SPEN places them in a market leading position in the adoption and use of mobile systems within their business. This now embraces an ever increasing range of tasks, including joining contractors into the same processes and management structure. The delivery platform provides the flexibility for them to design solutions that are fit for purpose and cost effective across a range of devices, data types and functions.

Conway Williams, Business Systems Director, SPEN concludes: “We are excited that we have a hugely significant tool in place with our mobile platform that will support the business and our customers moving forward; the challenges won’t diminish, but we have technology and experience to prevail.”

“For any utility provider looking to embrace mobile enterprise technologies, there are three things to consider: Firstly, plan for the long term, recognising that requirements and capabilities will need to evolve; secondly, bring the field workforce with you on the journey; and thirdly, look at mobilisation as a discipline in its own right, not just as a simple extension of the office systems or capability – look at processes, tasks and data.

“The real benefits flow from the seamless integration (at the data and process levels), the field and the office, offering support to the enterprise.”

By David Baxter, senior technical consultant, Sigma Seven – part of Capita plc.
UTILITIES INNOVATION FORUM

A unique event dedicated to the role of technology and innovation in utilities
Last November’s Utilities Innovation Forum at The Belfry, West Midlands proved to be another fascinating day of discussion, debate and industry firsts.

With a focus on the future of technology in utilities, it featured inspiring talks from the industry’s most forward-thinking members including Futurologist David Rowan, as well as providing peer group sessions and discussions with the Panasonic team and invaluable insight into new and emerging technologies from both Panasonic and key sector partners.

Bringing together leading executives and key decision-makers from across the industry, the exclusive one-day event provided its 74 attendees with a packed agenda designed to arm them with the tools and knowledge they need to be true innovators in their field. With talks and interactive debates covering topics such as ‘improving productivity on the go’ and ‘effectively tackling common technology challenges’, it also included special guest speakers from industry leaders including Microsoft, AA, Vodafone and UK Power Network.

Rounded off with an evening of networking, dinner and entertainment from comedian Sean Lock, Panasonic Utilities Innovation Forum 2014 was an experience not to be missed.

TO MAKE SURE YOU DON’T MISS OUT ON PANASONIC UTILITIES INNOVATION FORUM 2015, PRE-REGISTER NOW.
MANAGED MOBILE DEPLOYMENT ENHANCES PRODUCTIVITY

By Lee Johnson, NetMotion Wireless
A successfully managed mobile deployment makes your field workers more productive and ultimately better prepares your organisation to reach its strategic goals.

Building a successful mobile deployment, however, has many challenges. How do you ensure continued connectivity to real-time applications while workers are travelling from location to location? How do you ensure mobile devices accessing your network via cellular or WiFi networks are secure? How do you get insight into what field workers are accessing over your network and what applications they’re using?

You can overcome these challenges by following these industry best practices.

1. CREATE A SECURE, SEAMLESS USER EXPERIENCE
Lack of user acceptance is the most common reason mobile deployments fail. Workers become frustrated when they lose connections and must diagnose connectivity issues. Productivity plummets when applications crash and data lost.

SOLUTION?
Instead of using virtual private network (VPN) software that wasn’t built for the wireless environment, invest in a mobile VPN that ensures connectivity, seamless network roaming, and puts an end to data loss and crashing.

2. CONTROL MOBILE DEVICE USE
Another challenge for IT managers is lack of control over devices in the field which leads to misused corporate networks, high bandwidth usage costs, and unsecure devices.

SOLUTION?
A mobile VPN provides a management interface to:
- Set and enforce access.
- Improve security and prevent bandwidth-intensive actions.
- Limit access to applications, intranets or sites.
- Enforce restrictions by connection speed or time of day.
- Prioritise users to give critical traffic priority.

3. VISIBILITY INTO USAGE PATTERNS AND PROBLEMS
Monitoring performance across multiple networks is a challenge. With a lack of visibility and no way to track performance, the task is nearly impossible.

SOLUTION?
Look to invest in network performance management software that provides visibility into cellular deployment and offers business intelligence tools to track productivity.

4. ENFORCE DEVICE SECURITY
Without visibility into mobile devices, infected devices could access your intranet and back office applications, spreading viruses and malware.

SOLUTION?
Best-in-Class mobile VPN software controls access via Network Access Control (NAC) and verifies only secure devices. Administrators can respond with a warning, remediation, or quarantine to protect the network without hampering worker productivity.

5. MANAGE MOBILE DEVICES REMOTELY
Many mobile devices carry outdated software or require patches—but managing upgrades is difficult if they’re not visible to IT and workers must surrender their devices for upgrades.

SOLUTION?
Mobile VPN software gives IT managers the tools to manage mobile devices remotely and push application updates and patches to the field. This keeps devices up to date while offering significant labour and cost savings.
Wales & West Utilities core business is the safe and secure transportation of gas across its distribution network throughout Wales and the south west of England. With a 35,000km network, the company transports gas to the homes and businesses of 2.5 million consumers across a geography covering a sixth of the UK, serving a population of more than 7 million people.

For Wales & West Utilities field engineers, the Panasonic Toughbook CF-19 rugged notebooks are their primary tool for communication, information and reporting in the organisation’s efficient emergency response and metering operation.

As well as the ergonomic design and computing power of the market leading rugged notebooks, the support from the Panasonic Toughbook professional services team, called ProServices, has been a major contributing factor to the longterm success of the relationship.

SPECIALIST DESIGN, MANUFACTURING & SUPPORT

Wales & West Utilities has its fleet of 370 field engineer vehicles equipped with Panasonic Toughbook computers, including their own purpose built docking stations with separate ergonomically designed 10 inch screens, audio speakers and vehicle antenna. The ProServices team is responsible for the design and manufacture of the vehicle solution and its ongoing support.

With the fleet ranging from vans to pick-up trucks and 4x4 vehicles, the initial design and installation of the Panasonic Toughbook solution was no simple task, explained Andrew Pettiford, Transport Manager at Wales & West Utilities.

“We wanted the vehicles to become the engineers’ office when they arrived at a job,” said Andrew. “The Panasonic Toughbook CF-19 is docked securely and out of sight in the back of the vehicle.

There is then a screen, keyboard and speakers in the front of the cab that can be pulled down and used when the vehicle is stationary. The system is also connected to an antenna in the vehicle for effective 3G communications when in the community and for WLAN updates when in the utility company’s depots.

Panasonic ProServices first designed, tested and installed the different vertical and horizontal docking stations for the vehicles using its specialist, in-house CAD designers and manufacturing team.
The team then sourced the compatible screen and communication elements of the solution and scheduled the installations, working hand-in-hand with the utility.

**ESSENTIAL FOR PRODUCTIVITY AND MANAGEMENT**

"It is a very important and sophisticated solution for our business," explained Andrew. "Our engineers are homebased and work on a rotation system. This solution allows them to receive their job information without having to come into the office and when they arrive at a location they can use the system to record and report information in real time.

Our job despatch team can also see where the engineers are at all times and this improves our operational efficiency and response times, which is especially important for emergency calls."

**LIFETIME SUPPORT**

As well as installing the solution, Panasonic ProServices also provides a support contract to keep the vehicles on the road. "Whenever there is a fault or issue with the vehicle solution, our engineers’ call is directed to the Panasonic ProServices team," said Andrew. "Our first line support team is connected into our network and many times they are able to find a solution from the desktop but if there is a fault then a Panasonic repair team is dispatched to the vehicle. This support contract helps our engineers effective and provides me with important information to manage costs and to spot any recurring faults."

In addition, when the screen previously used for the solution went end of life, Panasonic found a fresh supplier to replace the unit. The new screen technology was updated with the latest backlit LED display technology and more efficient power use but importantly the screen’s form factor remained the same to make it compatible with the existing solution.

During the eight years that the Panasonic Toughbook solution has been in place at Wales & West Utilities the vehicle fleet has changed quite radically from heavily Vauxhall focused to a mix of vehicle manufacturers. However, each time a new model is chosen or a manufacturer changes the design of a new vehicle, the Panasonic ProServices team is able to adapt the design of the Toughbook solution to fit. This flexibility has enabled Transport Manager Andrew to make the most of his existing fleet and to pick the best new vehicles for the business without having to worry about whether the field engineers’ communication system will be compatible.

He added: "In fact, on many occasions the docking solutions have lasted so well that we are able to remove them and with a conversion kit simply reinstall them in new vehicles."

This flexibility and adaptability was also an important consideration when the company recently carried out a refresh of its rugged notebooks. Following a comprehensive review, the company decided to refresh its devices with the latest model of the Panasonic Toughbook CF-19.

"Although the ultimate decision sat with the IT Department, there is no doubt that the fleet considerations, the flexibility of the solution and the support processes in place with Panasonic were an important part of the decision making process," said Andrew.

Panasonic’s reputation for rugged, specialised mobile devices combined with expert design, manufacturing and support from the ProServices team has proved the ideal solution for Wales & West Utilities’ needs.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE TOUGHBOOK CF-19 >
UK Power Networks owns and maintains the electricity cables and lines across London, the South East and East of England, keeping the lights on for the population. Its 2,500 field engineers maintain and upgrade power equipment, move and connect new electricity cables and carry out maintenance near or on overhead power lines.

When UK Power Networks implemented a business transformation process to improve customer service and make savings through efficiencies, a fundamental step in the process was equipping its field engineers with a single, mobile computing device to meet their needs.

“Our colleagues can be found up poles and down holes and often in very difficult working environments so the mobile device we chose was critical to the success of the project,” said Jon Mason, a UK Power Networks lead field engineer and seconded head of mobile solutions for Business Transformation.

After reviewing options, the business selected a shortlist of three providers and established a mobile working group, made up of lead field engineers, field engineers, field staff supervisors, fitters, jointers, linesmen and other staff across all three of its operating regions to trial the devices. Alongside the trial, the company also organised a mobility day where 150 business representatives, comprising of both field staff and all levels of management, evaluated the devices and discussed the functionality with the vendors.

“It was very important to us that the workforce had a strong voice in the choice of device and that there was high user acceptance,” said Jon. “They put the devices through their paces and the rugged Panasonic Toughpad tablet won hands down.”

“The ruggedness of the Panasonic Toughpad was very important to our field staff and also the ability to read the tablet screen in daylight. When the team went out into direct sunlight it was a clear winner for visibility.”
Jon went on to say that small but important features, such as the LED light on the tablet camera, were not available on other devices they tested. ‘The design of the Panasonic Toughpad tablet had been clearly thought through for the utilities industry’ he said. ‘Often working underground or in dark environments, the LED light on the camera is an essential feature for our staff for effective image capture.’

Today, the Panasonic Toughpad FZ-G1 tablet is being rolled out to 2,500+ field staff across the business and the device is their critical communication tool. Connected via 3G to the company’s SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, the field staff receive their job instructions through the device using mobile SAP applications, which have been called ‘My Jobs’ on the tablets.

The engineers are able to access real-time and offline maps, asset information, health and safety and policy and procedure information. They then report and record their activity on the device and the information is relayed in real-time back to the central systems.

When there is limited connectivity, the information is stored on the device and relayed when connection is re-established.

“The benefits over our old, complex paper-based system is a vast improvement,” said Jon. “For example, with more than 14,000 sub-stations in London alone, the integrated map and asset information is a huge time saver. Due to the electricity risks involved in our business, we are also heavily safety process, policy and procedure driven. All the necessary information is stored on the Toughpad tablet with a search feature ensuring the field staff can find information quickly. It also relieves them from having to carry around large amounts of documentation.”

“The electronic workflow system makes sure that field staff follow the correct procedure in the right order, such as risk assessments before starting work. Finally, if they complete a job early, information on the next task can be relayed to them directly without having to return to the office, improving productivity and cutting down on costly, excessive travel.”

“The Panasonic Toughpad tablets are an essential element of our business transformation programme and Panasonic has delivered on everything we asked for and some.”

The latest version of the Panasonic Toughpad FZ-G1 tablet is a fully rugged Windows 8.1 Pro device with 10.1 inch display. Powered by fourth generation Intel® Core™ technology with reduced power consumption, the device is faster for graphics performance and increases the standard battery life from eight hours to 10 hours (up to 20 hours with high capacity battery). With the high-performing battery option and new optional hot-swap battery capabilities, the latest Toughpad FZ-G1 can also offer seamless, uninterrupted 24-hour operation to continuously service mobile workers on shifts.

In addition, the device is equipped with the latest industry leading GPS technology to allow field staff to pin point their work areas and destinations faster and more accurately than ever before. Data communication includes the latest Wireless LAN 802.11ac technology that radically improves data transfer times.

The tablet is suitable for workers that need to operate touchscreen tablets with gloves and uses the latest IPS Panel technology providing a new level of viewing quality for tablet users working outside.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE TOUGHPAD FZ-G1 >
Yorkshire Water

A Panasonic Toughbook to Meet Every Yorkshire Water Mobile Workers’ Need

Operating more than 700 water and sewage treatment works and 120 reservoirs, Yorkshire Water supplies around 1.24 billion litres of drinking water each day and collects, treats and disposes of about one billion litres of waste water safely back into the environment – all using 62,000 miles of pipeline.

Rated one of the best suppliers in the UK, Yorkshire Water has worked closely with Panasonic Toughbook for almost 15 years to ensure its staff have the best mobile technology to hand to continuously improve their service.

With more than 1,500 Panasonic devices deployed to its mobile workforce, Yorkshire Water uses the Panasonic Toughbook notebooks to improve the efficiency of its teams whether in the hands of its customer-facing staff, field engineers and technicians or contractors.

MEETING DIFFERENT NEEDS

As part of a major asset replacement scheme, Yorkshire Water recently re-examined the range of mobile devices available and their suitability for different job roles.

“When we first started to use Panasonic mobile technology, almost 15 years ago, we deployed one type of rugged device but because of the changes in our business and advances in mobile technology that approach has changed significantly over time,” explained Darren Metcalfe, Client Services Engineering Team Leader at Yorkshire Water. “Today, we let the requirements of the different field staff help define the type of Panasonic Toughbook notebooks we deploy.”

After reviewing the range of Panasonic Toughbook notebooks and Toughpad tablets available and conducting pilot projects, Yorkshire Water is now deploying three different Panasonic devices.
CUSTOMER FACING REQUIREMENTS

The water company is rolling-out Panasonic Toughbook CF-C2 notebooks, one of the most durable and flexible business convertible PCs in the market, for its customer-facing mobile workers such as meter readers. This semi-rugged device is ideal for displaying information to customers in a PC or tablet format, is lighter than its fully rugged counterparts and has a hand strap for easily holding in one hand and recording information.

VIEWING SCREENS & LEGACY SYSTEMS

Employees such as Yorkshire Water’s Micro Engineers, who commission new sites and maintain systems, use the semi-rugged Panasonic Toughbook CF-53 notebooks.

These engineers require a larger, 14 inch HD screen to view detailed system drawings and the ability to connect the notebook to legacy systems for system monitoring and diagnostics.

THE MOBILE OFFICE

Yorkshire Water’s field technicians, including clean water and waste water technicians, as well as its works contractors use the fully rugged Panasonic Toughbook CF-19 notebooks. These devices are designed to deal with the harshest weather conditions in the field.

They travel with the staff and are used to receive and record real-time job information, identify work locations and assets using the GIS capabilities and provide access to the mobile office wherever they are required.

“Whatever the job and device they use, the Panasonic Toughbook notebooks are the most essential piece of kit for our mobile workers,” said Darren. “They are their lifeline to the organisation.”

“We continue to use Panasonic because they listen and respond to our needs. As our business has become more customer-centric, we have required different mobile tools for different jobs and time and time again Panasonic have met that need.”

“Whatever the device, they are reliable and designed specifically for the mobile worker whether it’s the daylight viewable screens, the long-lasting battery lives, warranty and repairs or rugged design. They also all operate in a similar, intuitive manner making it easy for our staff to adapt to new devices as required.”

Paul Davidson, Corporate Sales Manager for Utilities at Panasonic Toughbook, said: “Yorkshire Water is an organisation at the forefront of mobile technology use in their industry. The company understands that providing mobile workers with the right specialist computing tools, tailored to their needs, delivers huge improvements in productivity and a more effective workforce.”

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT TOUGHBOOK NOTEBOOKS >
When DatAction, a computer services company, implemented an IT systems overhaul for Stedin Meetbedrijf — one of the three major energy monitoring services in the Netherlands — they knew which device would help the company’s mobile technicians most.

Stedin’s management were getting complaints from their staff about their old equipment, which used to crash often and meant technicians were unable to continue their work. But since technicians started using Toughpad tablets, they can carry on working seamlessly, with more time and no more frustrating delays.

Leen Van Der Weel, a team leader at Stedin Meetbedrijf explains: “The equipment we had before was too small and it became obsolete. There was a growing demand from the technicians to have an automated office environment. And that’s exactly what we have now with this new equipment.”

Now when a meter technician gets to the customer’s site, he simply enters the meter details into his Toughpad and takes accompanying snapshots.

Another team leader, Otto van der Wal, said: “We use a software application called Click to display job orders clearly on the tablet. Once the job’s done, the technician simply presses ‘Done’ and the ticket for the next job is automatically displayed meaning he can head off to the next job.

“But the great advantages of Toughpad tablets is that they are many times faster than our old PDAs were. They perform very well, even in bad weather, and the fact that they support Windows 8 is also really important to us. Because they’re rugged, they quite happily get bashed about in the van. They can certainly take a knock or two!”
With 20 years’ experience and 29,000 MW of wind power installed, Gamesa is a global leader in the wind power industry. Spanning 19 countries, the company employs over 1,600 operational maintenance engineers in four hundred wind farms around the world, processing around 16,000 work orders a month — which requires a powerful mobile solution.

To support Gamesa’s work, the company’s leadership know that it’s essential to use the latest and most enabling technology. That’s why Gamesa’s Mobility project has deployed Toughbook computers to its operations teams, who use them as a tool to enable big data management to be combined with maintenance.

A typical day begins at the substation planning and consulting technical documentation, preparing the day ahead and forming a checklist of work. Wind turbines operate 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week, so the control room operates with constant real time data. This makes the optimisation of time of paramount importance and the long battery life of Toughbook devices key to meeting objectives out in the field.

Another challenge is that all kinds of incidents must be anticipated and managed but Gamesa’s choice of Toughbook means smart compatibility between device and turbine. This enables maintenance teams to quickly and effectively load wind turbine data onto their machines so that everything is ready ahead of inspection.

Connectivity makes these devices ‘mobile repair shops,’ as all the remotely located people involved in each task were working side by side.

With optimum outdoor screen visibility, robust build for the most extreme eventualities, and resistance to the harshest weather conditions, the Panasonic Toughbook has become the perfect tool for Gamesa’s maintenance workers, who appreciate the durability and mobility of their devices.

As one Gamesa engineer explains: “It means that we can work with complete freedom. We can perform reporting tasks from the wind turbine itself, in the field without having to wait until we reach the substation.”

Panasonic and Gamesa are committed to technology advancement and protecting the environment, joining forces to help meet renewable energy targets, every day.
Ragn-Sells operates within the field of waste management, cleansing and recycling, including the collection, treatment and recycling of waste and waste products from companies, organisations and households.

Ragn-Sells focuses on actively reducing the environmental impact of its activities by providing well-planned and efficient waste transport services using digital route maps and effective processes for minimising potential sources of error and non-conformances.

Since late autumn 2011, the company has been involved in a project to roll out Toughbook CF-H2 Field mk1 laptops to its mobile field workers. By April 2012, around 120 units were in operation, spread across a number of different business areas.

The decision behind this gradual move was based on the fact that Toughbook computers are quick and easy to install, with the added bonus of having a docking function, so computers can easily be removed and used outside the vehicle as well.

Pelle Syrén is team leader in Länna and responsible for managing the roll-out of Ragn-Sells’ Toughbook project in the Greater Stockholm area: “The computers are used throughout the day. Drivers previously had to use handheld computers to manually scan tags before driving off in the morning, subsequently having to repeat the exercise several times during the day. It’s quite different now. Work orders are generated the day before and sent out to the vehicles, where drivers log in and upload their jobs for the day straight to their Toughbook.”

Before choosing their new IT equipment, Ragn-Sells had a number of important general requirements. After previously working with manual recording via handheld computers and paper, the company needed a more efficient solution to send and receive information in digital format, directly on board their cleansing vehicles. Reliability, durability, performance and adaptability mean that the computers can use various applications based on the different types of cleansing jobs carried out by Ragn-Sells.

The switch-over to the Toughbook CF-H2 Field has been a success. Syrén was surprised by how well the transition went, saying you always have to allow for a certain run-in period when making such changes. “When it comes to the next stage, I can see major advantages in starting to use the built-in camera to document non-conformances such as damaged bins or obstacles in the road. These can often prevent us from making collections or drops, which results in us not completing our assignments.”

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE TOUGHBOOK CF-H2 FIELD >
Statnett is the systems administrator of the Norwegian electrical system. This involves the operation of around 11,000 kilometres of high-voltage power lines and 150 power stations throughout Norway. Operation is monitored by a nationwide control centre and three regional control centres with inspectors all over the country, whose job it is to check the lines.

In order to allow the staff to carry out preventative maintenance and to be more equipped to deal with emergencies, Statnett had to supply its staff with tools to streamline their work. Because the inspectors sometimes operate in harsh weather conditions, ordinary PCs cannot do the job. The solution was to equip all inspectors at Statnett with a Panasonic Toughbook CF-19, a convertible notebook PC that can withstand all kinds of weather and hardship, featuring a long battery life as well as GPS.

Inspectors Morten Svartsen and Thomas Sandberg form one of many teams that inspect and secure the power grid in Norway. They patrol the power lines up and down Norway to make sure there is no damage to the lines, masts or glass insulators, and that trees and bushes aren’t growing too close to the lines. “In the past, we had to walk the lines on foot and write our reports in large binders using pen and paper. Each span had a separate page, and we pencilled trees and line damage onto the page. It was hard going and not without difficulties when it was raining, snowing or very cold,” explains Morten.

“We also had paper maps that we used to find our way to masts and lines, but you needed plenty of experience and an intimate knowledge of the forests and terrain to locate specific masts in need of inspection. It was manual work and took a long time.”

In their work, the inspectors use ARC Pad, a program that doesn’t need a network connection out in the field. The program also has a detailed map of the power grid throughout Norway activated by the Toughbook’s GPS function. This way, inspectors know exactly where they are at any given time.

“For instance, if we discover a tree standing too close to the power line, we can easily note it down in the report and then import the exact GPS coordinates into the system,” says Thomas. “As soon as we’re back in the car, we dock the Toughbook to connect it to the web and charge the batteries. The report is synchronised immediately with the main server at Statnett. A work order is sent to the emergency response team, which deploys to trim or take down the tree. Using the GPS coordinates in the report, the emergency response team can easily find its way to the exact spot on the map rapidly and without any problems. It’s incredibly practical and saves time for everyone involved.”

The Toughbook CF-19 bundles many useful functions into a single device. In the car, it’s used as a docked PC connected to the internet and the server. Out in the field, it easily folds into a tablet computer, with a stylus held securely in place by a strap. Back at the office, it’s docked and connected to an external keyboard and monitor, and works just fine as an office PC.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE TOUGHBOOK CF-19 >
HOW TOUGH ARE YOU?

Take on any business challenge with your perfect Toughbook or Toughpad

INTRODUCING TOUGH SELECTOR

Every business is different, but one thing is the same; when you go to work, you need technology that can withstand whatever the day may hold. Our ruggedised Toughbook and Toughpad products are built to handle the harshest environment, delivering high levels of performance and responsiveness for labour intensive industries

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WELCOME TO THE TOUGH SELECTOR
ARE YOU PART OF THE TABLET PRODUCTIVITY REVOLUTION?

Latest research shows UK tablet user productivity has leapt to 44%

Commissioned by Panasonic and carried out in November 2014, one of the most comprehensive studies of tablet use in European business has pointed to a staggering productivity revolution underway as a result of the deployment of tablets in the workplace. Detailing quantitative research collected from more than 2,000 tablet user and purchaser interviews, it spans the UK, Germany, France, Benelux, Italy, Spain, Russia, Turkey and Poland.

Here’s an executive summary of the findings:

PRODUCTIVITY REVOLUTION

Tablet use in European business is sparking a productivity revolution with 70% of employers reporting substantial productivity improvements from employees using tablets.

Across Europe, tablet purchasers in Turkey, (80%), Russia (79%), Italy (77%) and Spain (74%) were most convinced of the productivity benefits of tablets for the workforce.

EMPLOYERS’ ESTIMATIONS

On average, employers estimated that productivity amongst tablet using employees had risen by a staggering 33%. However, the highest estimated productivity rates were reported by buyers in the UK (44%), Turkey (42%) and Poland (43%) – well above the average productivity improvements of 33%.
PRODUCTIVITY INCREASE BY INDUSTRY
Manufacturing appeared to be the industry sector benefiting most from tablet deployment with 77% of buyers in this sector reporting productivity benefits. 74% of Telecoms and Utilities tablet buyers had seen productivity benefits, 72% in Retail and Wholesale and 71% in Financial Services.

TABLET USERS’ PRODUCTIVITY INCREASE
Interestingly, the tablet users themselves were less certain but still 41% believed that working with a tablet had increased their productivity and estimated their productivity improvement at a similar 30% on average.
TABLETS AN INDESPENSABLE WORK TOOL?

Tablets are also being used for a wide range of specialist work. A fifth (20%) of users were connecting scanners, printers or cameras to their tablets using USB or Serial ports. 18% had used their tablets for GIS information, 13% as a bar code reader, 10% for taking customer payments, 10% monitoring logistics operations, 8% for signature capture and 6% for smart card authentication and scanning RFID and NFC tags.

The industry sectors leading in the more specialist use of tablets in the workplace were transport, distribution, telecoms and utilities. The research also identified a trend that employees in the countries with the largest productivity increases (Italy, Spain, Russia and Turkey) were also those using tablets for the widest range of specialist uses.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Despite these productivity increases, users report that there is still room for improvement with their tablet devices. 68% of users said that they were not completely satisfied with the performance of their tablet for work-related activities.
TABLET DISSATISFACTION

By industry sector, 12% of tablet users in Transport, Travel and Distribution said they were dissatisfied with their device, 5% in Telecoms and Utilities and 4% in the Public and Not-for-Profit sector.

Those that used their tablet for more specialised work activity were also almost twice as frustrated with the poor design and functionality of their devices – 65% compared to 33%.

In addition, 86% of tablet purchasers reported that their users had encountered problems with their tablets in the past 2 years and 77% reported issues as a result of poor design or functionality.

At the top of the list were issues such as: Battery life too short (37%), damaged too easily (17%), unusable in sunshine (17%), not enough interfaces (15%).

TOP 5 BUSINESS TABLET CRITERIA

The top 5 criteria for business buyers selecting a tablet were functionality (69%), price (57%), ease of use (54%), compatibility with business operating system (53%) and resilience to damage (51%). Tablet users also ranked the same top 5 considerations but placed more emphasis on functionality (76%) and ease of use (65%) as their top two criteria.
TOUGHBOOK AND TOUGHPAD

SPECIALIST DEVICES FOR THE UTILITIES SECTOR

Mobile working in the utilities sector presents its own unique challenges. There’s the need to give your field staff access to digital information, whilst carrying out inspection and maintenance in remote or difficult locations. The requirement to ensure safe working conditions. And the demand for efficient asset management or the need to work where power sources are unavailable and the elements are a constant enemy.

That’s where Toughbook and Toughpad come into their own.

TOUGHBOOK CF-19
The market-leading 10.1” convertible notebook, which sets the benchmark in ruggedness.

TOUGHBOOK CF-C2
One of the most durable and flexible business convertible PCs in the market, combining 12.5” HD display, desktop performance, world-class connectivity and advanced mobility features.

TOUGHPAD FZ-G1
Fully rugged 10.1” tablet, with outdoor viewable screen, that sets a new benchmark in field-capable devices.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL PRODUCT OVERVIEW >
TOUGHPAD FZ-M1
7” outdoor tablet with fully rugged reliability, 10-finger multi-touch display and wide-ranging connectivity options.

DOES ANY MOBILE DEVICE OFFER EVERYTHING WE NEED?

TOUGHPAD FZ-E1/FZ-X1
First in the Toughpad family to offer voice capability, these fully rugged 5” devices combine the best of handheld, smartphone and tablet in a compact form factor.

TOUGHBOOK CF-54
The ideal combination of lightweight mobility, flexible configuration and semi-rugged durability, with a 14” HD LCD.
THE POWER TO TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS WITH YOUR PERFECT SOLUTION

Panasonic Toughbook Technology has the power to revolutionise your business; empowering your workforce, breaking down barriers, and letting you conquer even the toughest environments.

The aim of ProServices is to maximise the power of your Toughbook, allowing your workforce to realise ultimate productivity anywhere, anytime and without interruption. ProServices provides customised solutions to maximise your business capabilities.

This, combined with the proven durability of Toughbook and Toughpad products and the backing of a world-class service, will ensure that your workforce never miss a beat.

From the outset, our experts work with your business to fully understand your needs and the challenges you face.

**ENGINEER**
- Solution consultancy and design
- Bespoke in-house engineering with extensive QA
- Create a mobile office in vehicle for ultimate in-field efficiency

**SUPPORT**
- Unmatched global service
- End-to-end deployment, tailored to your business
- Multilingual helpdesk
- Training on products and solutions from the experts

**CUSTOMISE**
- Customised branding and casing solutions*
- Personalised BIOS, software imaging and settings
- Asset tagging to increase security
- 3rd party integration and accreditation

**PROTECT**
- 96 hour turnaround for repairs as standard**
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*Available on certain devices and on a project basis
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TAKE YOUR OFFICE TO THE ROAD

Thanks to our range of custom vehicle docking solutions, your field staff can work as efficiently on the road as they would in the office. Providing easy access to the devices and applications directly from the dock, they’re the safe and secure way to stay productive at all times.

Maximised power management to minimise downtime
Reduced set up time for every job, just dock and drive
Easy access to secondary screens and applications on the move
Optimised 3G/4G, GPS and WLAN connectivity, ensuring faster data transfer
Peace of mind that your device is secure and compliant with safety legislation

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE TOUGHBOOK AND TOUGHPAD DOCKS >

WHERE THERE’S A WILL, THERE’S A WAY

Why not challenge our ProServices docking expert, Will Holmes, to create the perfect docking solution for your fleet and help improve your field workforce?

CHALLENGE WILL >