

Hawkes Bay Council toughens up

CUSTOMER

Central Hawkes Bay
District Council



CHALLENGE

Empower building inspectors with technology to be more productive in the field

SOLUTION

A fully rugged Toughpad FZ-G1 Windows 8 Pro tablet that enables Council inspectors to work on the go in any environment

At the Central Hawke's Bay District Council, building inspectors have been armed with the latest in rugged technology. The Toughpad FZ-G1 tablet computers which provide a full Windows 8 Pro computer in a compact tablet format, are set to provide a more efficient and productive way of working. The inspectors use their Toughpads as desktop computers when docked in the office – but their tough capabilities and the flexibility of a tablet really comes into play when they visit building sites in the region.

The Central Hawke's Bay District Council (CHBDC) provides a range of services to the over thirteen thousand residents who call the area home. A long term user of Panasonic Toughbook laptops, the CHBDC has welcomed the introduction of the Toughpad tablets, which provide the proven benefits of tough technology in a more mobile and convenient form factor.

Distributed by Sektor, the Toughpads are provided to CHBDC by software and services provider NCS Software. NCS also provides the MagiQ business systems used by the Council.

AN IDEAL SOLUTION

According to Richard Thomas, IT manager at CHBDC, the Toughpads are an ideal solution for field work. "Our building inspectors take them along whenever they are required to assess progress on construction sites," he says.

The inspectors are able to schedule and complete inspections in the field using the MagiQ Inspections Mobile application on their Toughpads. They can download inspection details, complete the inspection on-site and then upload the completed inspection details all while still in the field.

CEO at NCS Software Colin Lillywhite says the company recommends the devices to clients like CHBDC owing to their proven durability and pedigree. "Field workers can have complete confidence that even if they drop these machines, they will keep on going," he notes.

“Users can have complete confidence that even if they drop these machines, they will keep on going”

David Kamper
Account Manager at NCS Software



TOUGHBOOK

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As a complete Intel Core i5 computer running Windows 8 Pro, Thomas points out that the disarmingly small and compact FZ-G1 Toughpad does everything a 'normal' laptop does. "Docked at a desk, it's just a computer, with an external keyboard, mouse and monitor. Out of the dock, it's a tablet which is just slightly heavier and thicker than a standard tablet device."

He says the Council's previous experience with Toughbooks provided perfect insight into the ability of Panasonic machines to handle work outdoors. "We decided long ago that a 'normal' computer isn't the best idea on building sites where you have to cope with dust, potential knocks and drops and other characteristics of these environments. Our Toughbooks have survived for over 4 years now with no trouble whatsoever."

LIGHTER, MORE FLEXIBLE, JUST AS TOUGH

The major difference with the Toughpads over the Toughbooks, Thomas says, "is that they are a hell of a lot lighter."

Not only that, but the Toughpads also incorporate a 'useable' 5MP camera (the cameras typically installed on a laptop are typically only good for video calls), dedicated GPS and sunlight-viewable screens. "The availability of a camera on the FZ-G1 Toughpad is a real advantage as inspectors can take photographs of sites where work needs to be completed and include them in reports, saving a lot of hassle. In addition, the visibility of the screen is especially important and something you won't get with a regular tablet, and the built-in stylus is excellent," he adds.

Continuing, Thomas says that using NCS's MagiQ application in combination with tablet computers means substantial efficiency gains are made. "The MagiQ application loaded on the Toughpads equips our inspectors to do their work on site without any paper. That's a big advantage as it eliminates 'double handling' and information goes straight into the system."

WHEN TOUGH IS BETTER

Tough technology is taking hold all over New Zealand as organisations which do their work outdoors appreciate the benefits of devices built to handle the environment, says Darryn Smith, Toughbook and Mobility Channel Manager.

"In many instances, including at the CHBDC, a single Toughpad can replace several previous devices, greatly easing management cost and complexity. The Windows 8 Pro FZ-G1 is proving itself as a versatile machine in many industries across the country, offering the power of a full laptop computer to run all standard applications whilst being managed within the standard Windows framework," Smith says.



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