



GLOBAL TECH GROUP CHOOSES PANASONIC TABLETS FOR USE IN MINING INDUSTRY

PANASONIC RUGGED TOUGHPADS SUPPORT INTELLIGENT DRIVER TRAINING IN THE HARSH CONDITIONS OF AUSTRALIA'S MINING INDUSTRY

Panasonic rugged Toughpad tablets are driving an intelligent solution developed by Australian company Global Tech Group™ that overcomes the challenges of safely and effectively training single-seat heavy vehicle operators in today's mining industry.

www.toughbook.com.au



“The Toughpad is up to the task. It’s ruggedised and well-suited for use in the mining industry.”

Richard Vorias, Managing Director of Global Tech Group™ explained that there were a number of key considerations in developing and patenting the Portable Vehicle Training System (PVTS™).

First and foremost, when training mining personnel on extremely large single-seat vehicles such as dozers, graders and excavators, it’s not possible for the trainer to be next to the operator. This means that operators generally follow up their in-class training by driving the vehicle under the instruction of an experienced instructor who trains them over the mining radio network and views them from a safe distance. This method lacks privacy, which can lessen its effectiveness, and instructors have no way of viewing the trainee’s actions in the cabin.

Global Tech Group™ has developed and is marketing a solution that provides remote, private and live training with instantaneous feedback and guidance, and is designed with robust technology to withstand the rigours of mine site environments. The PVTS™ has now been implemented by customers within the industry.

The company went through some trial and error when initially developing the solution. The first remote system tested on a mining site was a ‘suitcase’ that included a TV monitor. It soon became evident that the system was too heavy and large to be used in a vehicle cab and with too short a range to be versatile enough for training, as well as offering little resilience to dust and glare.

Global Tech Group™ went back to the drawing board, and building on this experience, developed a compact, mobile and rugged solution with one-to-one Wi-Fi communication, which they tested in the field with certified instructors on a range of live mine sites. This included tablets that were capable of withstanding the environmental extremes of blistering summer heat all the way through to driving rain, constant exposure to dust, and relentless vibration and shock.

The key elements of the PVTS™ solution include:

- The FZ-G1 Panasonic Toughpad - an ultra thin and lightweight fully rugged tablet device, used in conjunction with a specifically designed clip on keyboard.
- 4 individual cameras that capture high-definition video images
- PVTS™ application
- A rugged headset
- A Pelican-style rugged case

- Operates to 500m line of sight/250m non line of sight
- Optional: Integrated Whole Body Vibration (WBV) analysis and assessment system.

Specifically tailored to the needs of the industry, this rugged solution can withstand the environmental challenges of training heavy vehicle operators in remote locations, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of training on a live mine site.

Richard Vorias said: “The Toughpad is up to the task. It’s ruggedised and well-suited for use in the mining industry - with IP ratings, an all-weather vibration, drop, dust and water-resistant design, a rugged keyboard and anti-glare screen, and fits into a compact case for carrying.”

The PVTS™ is light enough for one person to carry up the steep stairs of a heavy vehicle using the hands-free strap. It can be swapped between vehicles during drivers’ 15-minute ‘crib’ breaks and be up and running for the next training session, minimising any production delays.

The four cameras are mounted in and outside the cab of the trainee’s vehicle, while the instructor views the steering and other operations on the Toughpad screen and communicates via the headset. The cameras can also capture stills and video for later use in a classroom situation to demonstrate best practice or for review to improve performance.

The solution is unobtrusive for the driver, and the cameras and the screen provide visual clarity between driver and instructor in all weathers, day and night. The direct visual feedback from the cabin makes it easier for the instructor to guide the operator and impart best practice in safe, efficient machine operations including posture, steering and blade techniques.

One-to-one training between driver and instructor is more focused, with private, wi-fi connectivity that’s independent of the mining radio network, but still allows them to stay aware of the situational environment during sessions.

The Toughpad can be detached from the main unit and used up to 40 meters away, which gives the trainer greater flexibility in moving around a site to follow a vehicle.

“The rugged headset fits under a safety helmet, and the Toughpad is easy for a trainer to hold in their hand and use wi-fi to communicate with a driver from a safe distance without dropouts even when they are standing on the shoulder of a pit and the vehicle is 500 meters away.”

“Once a system is installed, there’s minimal maintenance, and customers can spend much more time training in live environments. It’s also possible for a single trainer to direct a number of vehicles,” Richard Vorias added.

Global Tech Group™ has now successfully sold the PVTS™ to customers in the mining industry and has received great feedback on its ease of use and the real productivity improvements made through the new training process.

About Global Tech Group

Global Tech Group™ Pty Ltd is a Brisbane, Queensland based company, specialising in the development and implementation of new markets with leading-edge technologies and partners. Global Tech Group™ is launching their products in the aviation, mining and construction industries. Their products are set to transform and digitise the operational day to day activities of management, compliance and training, with the aim to maximise operational productivity.

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About Panasonic Toughbook

Panasonic Toughbooks are used extensively worldwide by mobile professionals, field workers, the military, utilities, heavy industry, emergency services and organisations where durable mobile computing is critical to maximising productivity and uptime.

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