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BUSINESS



AUTOCARE DRIVES BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH RUGGED PANASONIC TOUHPAD

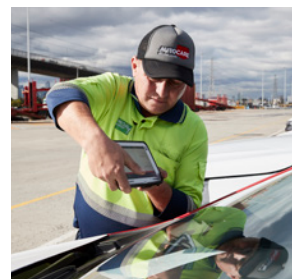
Autocare, Australia's largest automotive logistics company, has chosen the Panasonic FZ-B2 Android™ powered Toughpad to automate and streamline the processing of vehicle movements across Australia, boosting productivity for the organisation.



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TOUGHBOOK

TOUHPAD



The Drive To Innovate

Autocare is a Victorian supply chain company that handles over one million vehicle transport movements annually for major vehicle manufacturers, importers and dealers, including on-vessel scanning, on-wharf processing and direct dealer delivery.

Autocare found it increasingly difficult to efficiently capture and share important real-time customer data and job management updates, as drivers of the Autocare fleet of vehicle transporters were relying on older mobile devices operating on a slow and unreliable 2G network.

This system saw these employees using paper forms and documents, a key contributor to errors that impacted on customer satisfaction. In order to increase productivity levels across the company's 330-strong vehicle fleet and reduce costs related to system failures and errors, Autocare made the decision to invest in a rugged Android tablet device with a built-in scanner to replace legacy hardware.

Mark Povah, National IT and Systems Manager, Autocare said: "We needed to act quickly to upgrade our technology to stay competitive and ensure we were giving the best customer service possible. The Toughpad FZ-B2 was the only solution that could deliver a truly rugged system that was also easy for our drivers to use and could withstand the different environments we operate in."

"Panasonic addressed our need to automate and streamline our processes, and enabled us to innovate our business to ensure we're competing with the best of the best."

Most importantly, our increased agility and productivity has helped us better service our customers."

Ruggedised solutions for fit-for purpose applications

Despite the devices remaining inside the truck cabin much of the day, it was important for them to be able to function in the harsh outdoor conditions encountered in the vehicle loading process – such as weather, condensation and dust."

An integrated scanner was also needed for truck drivers to quickly process jobs when loading and delivering vehicles; along with the ability to capture data across vehicle movements, driver management and GPS tracking, which could automatically be sent to the Autocare TMS (transportation management system) to update customers in real-time.

For Autocare, the fully rugged 7-inch FZ-B2 was the right tool, with its highly configurable Android operating system, backed by field reliability with a sealed dust and water-resistant design, extended 14-hour battery life and anti-reflection daylight viewable display.

Field trials encourage user adoption & improve productivity

The partnership initially commenced on a trial basis, with Autocare testing four of the FZ-B2 Toughpads. After an overwhelmingly positive response among users and tangible benefits being seen instantly, the company has invested in 330 Toughpads across the business operating on a 4G network.

Device usage in the business has soared - increasing from below 45% with the previous solution to 97% with the Toughpad.

The total cost of ownership has also been dramatically reduced compared to the previous solution as less time and investment is spent on repairing and replacing devices. Productivity and accuracy has increased now that drivers are not waiting for load information, and vehicle movements and TMS updates are rapidly processed automatically. Driver communication has also been streamlined, with less need for emails, phone calls and SMS.

Partnerships; the key to success

Mark Povah states, "Implementing new technology has been a challenge in the past as it takes time and effort to train staff. The training and development that Panasonic's reseller, Gamma Solutions, provided to us was exceptional and meant the whole team was confident in using the Toughpads from day one."

Paul Fleming, National Sales Manager at integrator Gamma Solutions, said: "Arranging installation across a 330-strong fleet in a relatively short time period could have proved a tall order, but being meticulous with pre-testing and preliminary meetings was the key as this enabled us to avoid any teething problems for the business."

"We've worked with Autocare for the last 16 years so there is a trust and a great working relationship which makes everything that bit easier - it's remarkable how much the technology has developed in this period but with Panasonic's Toughpads, there's no doubt we're ahead of the game."

A bright future for mobility within transport & logistics

Marc Amelung, General Manager, Mobile Solutions, Panasonic Australia, said:

"The business that is ready for the future is a mobile one."

Our work with leading transport and logistics provider Autocare demonstrates how the FZ-B2 Toughpad's durable, powerful and customisable Android capabilities are the ideal mobile solution for organisations with field-based workers, who want to upgrade from pen-and-paper to increase productivity and improve performance while reducing total cost of ownership."

Following on from the initial rollout, Autocare will now be integrating various critical driver management tools on the Toughpad tablet, including fatigue management, messaging, documents and driver score cards. In addition, one of Autocare's other divisions is now trialling the FZ-A2 10-inch Android Toughpad, with plans to deploy an additional 30 units.

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.

When customers want to drive workforce automation in tough environments such as logistics and warehousing, the Toughpad FZ-B2 is highly portable and configurable with a rugged dust and water-resistant design, and multi-touch, high-brightness screens. Devices also support a range of peripherals including vehicle docks with antenna pass-through for the strongest communications signal while in the vehicle.

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