



Toughbooks in Action

Coca-Cola Amatil takes 600 Panasonic Toughbooks to the road



Coca-Cola Amatil, the bottler of Coca-Cola in Australia, has rolled

out 600 Panasonic CF-18 Toughbooks to business development representatives across the country, in a multi-million dollar deal.

The Panasonic Toughbooks will be used daily by the representatives, for capturing market and outlet information, conceptual selling and taking customer orders.

Looking for a reliable notebook that could support its business development teams on the road for long periods of time, across

all their typical selling environments, Coca-Cola Amatil took into consideration the recurring costs that accompany notebook failures, and chose the Panasonic Toughbook for its low total cost of ownership (TCO) delivered through rugged design features.

Michael Sumner, Vendor Relations Manager for Coca-Cola Amatil's Information Systems in Australasia, said the TCO of the Panasonic Toughbook was a significant consideration for Coca-Cola Amatil in making this decision, as the acquisition cost represents only a fraction of total cost to businesses in the long term.

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“Device failure rates push the TCO up, so even though the Panasonic Toughbook was more expensive up front than others we looked at, its low failure rate was a huge factor in our decision making process,” he said.

When researching notebooks, Coca-Cola Amatil performed extensive field trials with various devices and manufacturers and obtained feedback from the users on those devices. The data collected during the trials formed the basis for an economic evaluation, which took Coca-Cola Amatil to its decision to engage with Panasonic.

Coca-Cola Amatil looked at the advantages of a notebook equipped with rugged features such as a waterproof keyboard and ruggedised hard drive. The research concluded that, in the long-run, it was more cost-effective to implement hardware that would stand up to the wear and tear placed on units by the business development teams.

According to Sumner, Panasonic Toughbooks not only met their rugged requirements, but had the long battery life needed for extended periods in the field. The bright touch screen capability was also important to the Coca-Cola

Amatil team who spend their days in and out of stores, bottle shops, cool rooms, cellars and vaults – anywhere that Coca-Cola Amatil products are stored or sold.



“The Panasonic Toughbook’s ability to withstand shocks and knocks and its built-in wireless capability were huge selling points for us. Tests showed high breakage and failure rates with external or plug-in wireless cards, so embedded wireless as standard was particularly important. “Panasonic Toughbooks can be left inside the boot of the car in the searing Australian sun and then taken into a cool room, or a humid cooking environment. Not only that, the device also needed to withstand being held by the hinge and

opened and closed anywhere between 20 to 30 times a day, depending on the number of visits made,” he said.

With over 30 percent of Australian companies’ sales departments now using notebooks, Coca-Cola Amatil’s purchase illustrates the growing need for organisations to critically analyse the total cost of owning a notebook for sales force automation. The Panasonic Toughbook’s rugged features ensure a higher rate of reliability over a standard notebook, which is a key consideration in maintaining the productivity of mobile sales teams.

According to Mr Sumner, Coca-Cola Amatil’s business development teams have been extremely impressed with the capability of the device and the fact that it has a consistently-available wireless connection.

“In the near future, we intend on using the Panasonic Toughbooks as true tablet devices with a workflow solution, to increase the number of wireless applications on the devices, and introduce signature capture with the touch screen capability,” he said.

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