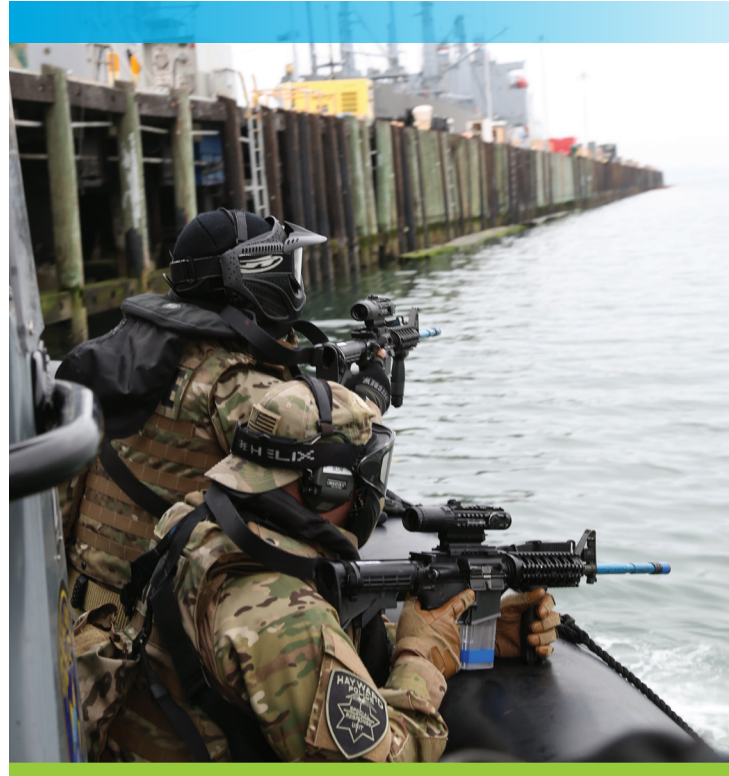


Panasonic recommends Windows.

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URBAN SHIELD 2014 PUTS TOUGHBOOK RUGGED LAPTOPS TO THE TEST.

ORGANIZERS AND VOLUNTEERS UTILIZE FULLY-RUGGED TOUGHBOOK LAPTOPS FOR LOGISTICS TRACKING AND MEDICAL CHECKPOINTS AT COMPREHENSIVE FULL-SCALE REGIONAL PREPAREDNESS EXERCISE.



CHALLENGE

Support logistics tracking, medical checkpoints and other activities at the Urban Shield 2014 comprehensive full-scale regional preparedness exercise.

SOLUTION

Organizers and volunteers relied on a range of ruggedized Toughbook® laptops and convertible tablet PCs—equipped with powerful processors, sunlight-viewable displays, all-weather designs and other key features—throughout the Urban Shield event to support nearly 60 participating first-responder teams as they tested their capabilities to respond to disasters and major emergencies.

RESULT

Throughout a grueling 48-hour exercise spread across five counties, the Toughbook devices stood up to the challenge without a single device failure.

TOUGHBOOK®

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“The Toughbook is the right choice because of its durability. There’s no worry about using it outdoors or throwing it in the back of a truck. It was kind of a no-brainer...Consumer-grade devices wouldn’t be able to withstand the conditions—we’d probably end up with cracked screens, and that is something you just can’t afford in life-threatening situations.”

—Michael Barnes, technical support analyst, Alameda County Sheriff’s Office

With nearly 60 participating first-responder teams, Urban Shield is one of the world’s largest comprehensive full-scale regional preparedness exercises. During this intense 48-hour event, SWAT, fire department and Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams from California, other U.S. states and countries as far away as Singapore push themselves to the limit as they test their skills and further refine their abilities to respond to disasters and major emergencies.

Described as the closest thing to real-life disaster scenarios, Urban Shield gives first responders an invaluable opportunity to prepare for real-life crises in a high-threat, high-density urban environment. Teams make their way through more than three dozen scenarios—including those involving public transportation, stadiums, bridges and other critical infrastructure—that are spread out across five Bay Area counties. Between scenarios, teams must stop at five strategically placed medical checkpoints to ensure they are fit to continue onward. More than 6,000 volunteers are required to keep the massive exercise running smoothly.

Just as in real-life disaster response activities, technology plays a critical role at Urban Shield. Not only do participants use mobile devices as part of the scenarios themselves, but this technology is also used by volunteers at the medical checkpoints as well as for logistics tracking throughout the event. None of these activities could be jeopardized due to a device failing on the job, especially when conditions are fast-paced or involve challenging weather. That’s why the Panasonic Toughbook® laptop is used by the overwhelming majority of first responders and was a critical device at Urban Shield 2014.

“The Toughbook is the right choice because of its durability. There’s no worry about using it outdoors or throwing it in the back of a truck. It was kind of a no-brainer,” said Michael Barnes, Alameda County Sheriff’s Office technical support analyst and part of the team organizing Urban Shield 2014. “They’re on the move constantly. Consumer-grade devices wouldn’t be able to withstand the conditions—we’d probably end up with cracked screens, and that is something you just can’t afford in life-threatening situations.”

With just a 14-person IT team supporting the massive Urban Shield event—and the scenarios located up to a two-hour drive from each other—dependable technology like the Toughbook laptop made all the difference at Urban Shield.

“If a laptop goes down in a situation like this, we typically wouldn’t have the time to go and swap it out. Losing a computer would be a pretty big deal and can even compromise a rescue,” Barnes said. “We have limited resources just like in a real disaster, and your chances of finding another device are slim.”

MEDICAL CHECKPOINTS, LOGISTICS TRACKING

Toughbook 19 rugged convertible tablet PCs were an invaluable tool for medical personnel roving throughout the exercise and stationed at each of the medical checkpoints, Barnes said. Personnel used the devices for patient tracking, to access information and to share live data with the medical departmental operations center at the Urban Shield emergency operations center. With many of the Urban Shield exercises taking place outdoors, participants appreciated the Toughbook 19 laptop’s sunlight-viewable display and all-weather design, he added.

A range of Toughbook devices—including the Toughbook 31 rugged laptop, Toughbook 19 rugged convertible tablet PC, Toughbook 53 semi-rugged laptop and Toughbook C2 semi-rugged convertible tablet PC—were used for logistics tracking and management throughout the exercise as well, Barnes said. Using the Windows®-powered Toughbook devices equipped with embedded Verizon Wireless 4G LTE mobile broadband connectivity, personnel were able to manage supplies ranging from cases of water to generators for each of the scenario sites throughout Urban Shield.

Throughout the 48-hour Urban Shield exercise, not a single Toughbook laptop failed on the job, Barnes said. And hundreds of first responders from across the United States and around the world walked away better prepared for the next disaster or major emergency.



LEARN MORE

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