RUGGED TABLETS
Feature Checklist

XPLORE™

For Government and Public Works Applications

This checklist highlights the features of rugged devices that commonly come into play in Government and Public Works applications. It is recommended you pay special attention to these points as you research different rugged device options for your own specific applications.

Top level security features

All technological devices used by non-military government agencies should be certified by the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS), which regulates the requirements for government security on computers. FIPS validation assures users that a given piece of technology has passed rigorous testing by a third-party lab and can be used to secure sensitive information. Some devices also include pre-boot authentication measures like integrated CAC readers or fingerprint scanners to protect data access from unauthorized users. Additionally, features like Absolute® Data and Device Security allow you to wipe data from remote locations and track stolen devices. Devices equipped with TPM 1.2 allow for added encryption options.

Fully mobile to complete critical workflows

Government applications often require personnel to input data on-site from many different locations. Mobile rugged tablets offer processing power, real-time communications, and overall performance on par with traditional computing systems, making workflows fully accessible in the field. Any rugged device intended for the field should be easy to carry – by hand, on foot – out of the vehicle using either a handle, carrying case, or a combination of the two. A lightweight tablet is ideal for data input while walking and working, as it eliminates the need to set the device on a flat surface.

Full day battery life

A long battery life is critical for keeping workers connected though an entire shift, no matter how far they may be from a power outlet. While some rugged tablets utilize energy efficient processing technology to extend standard battery life, hot-swappable batteries can provide up 20 hours of additional, uninterrupted rugged mobile PC power. Fast-charging multi-bay battery options are also available to ensure uptime all the time for your team.

Sunlight readable display for outdoor tasks

Public Works and Government personnel frequently work outdoors. They need to be able to read data under a variety of lighting conditions. Choosing a rugged tablet with an excellent sunlight readable display and ambient light sensor is crucial to ensure accurate viewability especially on bright days.

Fully rugged for lowest long-term cost

Breakdowns on the job can lead to costly data loss, downtime, and repair/replacement fees that can quickly add up. A rugged mobile PC design is critical for lowering costs in the long term and keeping Government personnel efficient. A suitable rugged device should not reboot or incur damage when dropped. Rugged tablets can operate in outdoor conditions, including inclement weather, and an IP65 rating or higher will ensure protection of device/data in wet and dusty/sandy areas. Solid State Drives protect better against shock than Hard Disk Drives, adding an extra level of protection to a device's data. Rugged tablets, left in a vehicle for prolonged periods, must be able to withstand the extremely high heat of a vehicle's interior without shutting down or breaking. Manufacturers' interpretation of rugged specs are not always standardized. Be sure to review and understand a rugged tablet's MIL-STD-810G testing parameters.

Flexible I/O, multiple ports

Avoid compatibility concerns or additional costs by selecting a rugged tablet with several standardized I/O ports. Multiple connectivity options allow a single device to be used broadly across multiple applications. At the very least, a rugged mobile PC should come with standard USB ports for simple data transfer and easy connection with a variety of other devices/equipment. Rugged tablets can offer additional specialized inputs (i.e. True Serial, HDMI-In) that support workflows in the Public Works sector. Fully rugged tablets also provide sealed port protection against water and dust penetration.

Advanced communication capabilities and GPS

Government work often involves coordinating personnel and assets in many different areas. Workers must be able to reliably transmit information back to a central area, and receive instructions and information no matter where their work takes them. Aside from Wi-Fi®, Bluetooth®, and Ethernet capabilities to enable local connectivity, mobile devices should also have options for wireless “anywhere connectivity” that enables connection in any location. Technology such as GOBI or 4G LTE provide this type of connection, and enable communications for remote or widespread field personnel. For Government work where route planning, navigation, and dispatch are key concerns, many devices come with an integrated GPS for location-based applications.

Mobile docking/mounting options

Rugged mobile PC manufacturers should offer a variety of vehicle docking options to extend the connectivity of the rugged tablet PC when used in vehicles or heavy machinery. Regardless of the mounting structure, personnel should be able to easily secure the device in the vehicle dock and activate a solid locking mechanism to prevent theft when left unaccompanied in the vehicle. The dock should also allow for easy removal of the device when transitioning back to handheld use outside the vehicle.

Display size

Display size can make or break productivity on mobile devices, and there are multiple factors that should influence your decision. Does a lot of information need to be viewed at once, or from a distance? Will a larger display be necessary for manipulating applications effectively? Before you buy, view the software you plan on using on different screens to gain a clear picture of each device’s readability.

Standard Operating System

If you are looking for an easy implementation of existing workflows applications or want to introduce new software on a device, a standard OS will keep things simple and cost effective. Many rugged tablets run on a full Windows® OS, instead of a pared down mobile OS, for more flexibility in applications. Android™ is also becoming a viable choice for many mobile enterprise workflows, thanks to highly customizable and open source APIs that allow for easy and secure integration with a variety of applications.