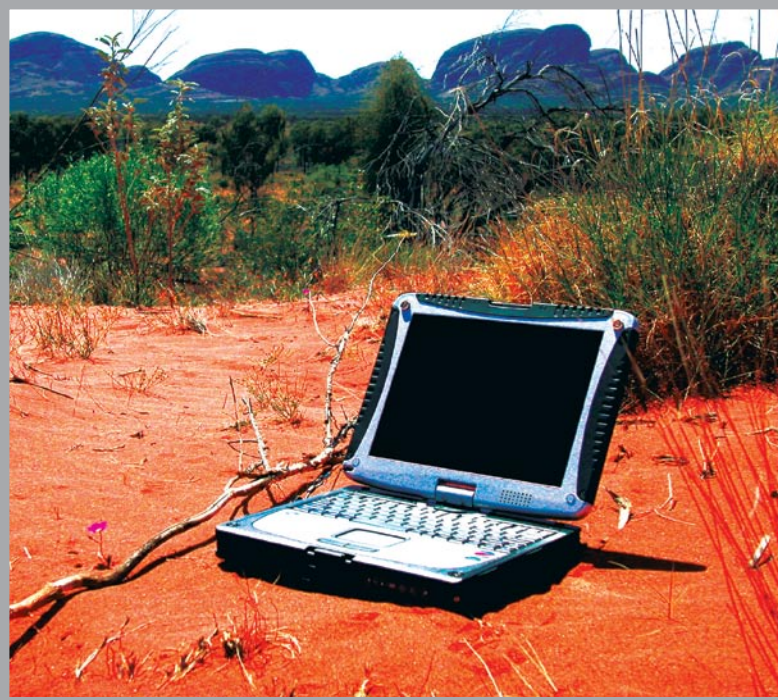


Panasonic Toughbook helps Byrnecut Mining Down Under



A Perth resources company is using Panasonic Toughbooks to help repair essential mining equipment in the depths of some of the world's largest underground mines.

Panasonic Toughbooks are built to military specifications and can withstand harsh working environments. These fully-rugged notebooks are used worldwide for demanding applications by heavy industry, emergency services, utility field service, the military, and mobile professionals.

Byrnecut Mining is a contract mining company that employs more than 1,000 people and has a multi-million dollar fleet of specialised underground mining equipment. It operates on sites around the world, including Australia's largest gold mine, Telfer.

At Telfer, the company uses centre-articulated vehicles which resemble large dump trucks to remove the coarse ore from the stope to the surface. This can be a long journey with the deepest mines in Australia up to 1,800 metres below the ground.

Byrnecut engineers and mechanics take Panasonic Toughbooks down the mines to provide diagnostic information from faulty vehicles to above ground workshops wirelessly. This onsite electronic evaluation allows for onsite repair and dramatically reduces repair time

Byrnecut Mining IT Manager Jeff Knuckey said the company turned to Panasonic after amassing a 'graveyard' of notebooks not built to withstand tough mining conditions.

"At one point we were going through a notebook every couple of weeks, with everything from broken screens to seized drives. We were buying up six new notebooks a month and they really weren't up to it," Knuckey said.

"For us the big positive was the total return on investment. There were other models that were initially cheaper, however over the following 12 months the Toughbooks easily came out in front in terms of value."

However it was not just the cost of notebook repair where Toughbook earned its stripes. Its increased reliability meant Byrnecut had fewer in-mine notebook failures which can cause thousands of dollars in lost productivity for each instance – as well as potentially disrupting important mine schedules. In some instances broken down haulage trucks need to be hauled to the surface, costing thousands of dollars each time.

Panasonic Toughbooks are built from the ground up to deliver high reliability in extreme environments and are extensively used throughout the mining and resources sector.



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They feature a 100 per cent magnesium alloy casing and are certified to the MIL-STD-810F standard. These military testing procedures ensure the notebooks withstand drops, shocks, vibration and extremes of temperature. In addition, they are sealed and rated at IP54 (Ingress Protection) level for dust and water resistance.

The notebooks include sealed keyboards and ports, flexible internal connectors and shock-mounted screens and hard drives.

Byrnecut Mining uses Panasonic Toughbook CF-30s for its underground diagnostic work. The Toughbook CF-30 is 3G wireless and Vista ready and is the benchmark model for outdoor notebooks. Greater flexibility and optimum WLAN reception are achieved through the diversity antennae which are integrated into the display casing.

Byrnecut Mining has been so impressed with the performance of the Toughbooks that it is now using them in mining sites throughout the world including Kazakhstan and Indonesia. In fact, the company has also extended their use outside the underground sites, bringing them into repair workshops and even providing them for their auditors as they do on-site inventory work.

Knuckey said Byrnecut Mining had issued a fleet of Panasonic Toughbook CF-18 convertible tablet PCs to help with the above ground auditing work. This allows auditors to do a lot of their work while on-site, collating any data they need while being on the network.

"The auditors can be just as tough on their notebooks as those working under ground," Knuckey said.

"Every now and again they'll send their Toughbook in for an upgrade and some work and they won't even package it. They literally just slap a sticker with the IT department's address on the lid of the Toughbook and drop it in the mail.

About Panasonic Toughbooks

Panasonic Toughbooks are used extensively worldwide by the military, utilities, heavy industry, emergency services, field workers, mobile professionals and organisations where durable mobile computing is critical to maximising productivity and uptime. In Australia, Panasonic Toughbook customers include Coca-Cola Amatil, Telstra, Rio Tinto, BHP, Ford Australia, BlueScope Steel, Aurora Energy and the Metropolitan Ambulance Service Victoria.



For more information about Panasonic Toughbooks, please visit www.panasonic.com.au or call 132 600.