

3 Must-Haves for Rugged Devices

A rugged device is just one piece of a complete rugged solution. Support, security, and manageability will keep employees working — in the field, on the road, and in the harshest conditions.

Mission-critical activities know no bounds. Whether for the military, civilian first responders, oil and gas engineers, shop-floor managers, or outside sales forces, mobile devices must remain reliable, secure, and manageable in harsh conditions and remote locations.

Hardware is only part of the story when it comes to serving these diverse on-the-go needs. Tough mobile devices also must be backed by comprehensive support and security services that give professionals in the field the same backing they expect when in their offices.

How can decision makers find the right combination of rugged mobile

computers and services for each job? Understanding the advantages of rugged notebooks will keep mobile workers productive and secure.

- **Rugged means greater reliability.** Productivity comes to a halt when a hardware component breaks if it's dropped accidentally or can't handle a downpour.
- **Rugged reduces support costs.** Mitigating the risks of hazardous environments or physical damage to devices lowers ongoing repair costs and frees service and support teams for strategic activities.
- **Rugged means longer life.** "Industrial strength" mobile devices are engineered to last longer than general-purpose hardware.

What to Demand From Ruggedized Mobile Devices

Even after narrowing the focus to the select category of ruggedized mobile devices, decision makers still face difficult choices. Here are three must-have factors that will lead you to the best options:

1. Hard-Working Hardware Options

Select mobile product portfolios that offer a choice of models that let organizations balance toughness and cost.

First, choose among semi-rugged or fully ruggedized devices. Industry-leading options in these categories offer common characteristics, such as:

- Displays that are readable under all lighting conditions, from bright sunlight to dim factory floors
- Durable materials, including ultra-polymers and magnesium alloys, that protect from physical hazards
- Special sealing and compression gaskets to keep dust, dirt, and rain from damaging electronic components.

Semi-rugged designs build on this foundation with protections appropriate for field service personnel, sales personnel, and others who routinely work outside of offices, but not in extreme environmental conditions. The best semi-rugged models offer:

- 30-inch drop protection
- Third-party certification of compliance with US military tests for withstanding vibration, humidity, temperature extremes, and altitude.

Oil-rig engineers, military personnel, first-responders, and others who require reliability under the most extreme conditions benefit from fully

A Checklist for Rugged Mobile Devices

✓ **Customized hardware options.** For greatest flexibility, look for a product line that offers:

- The right solution for each job: reliable semi-rugged notebooks for tough environments and fully ruggedized devices for extreme conditions
- A variety of screen sizes
- Data-entry options (including keyboards, trackpads, and touchscreens) to suit a variety of needs

✓ **Professional support and services.** To reduce the chance that something goes wrong in the field and to minimize disruption if it does, look for a vendor that offers:

- 24x7 access to expert support if problems occur
- Deployment services for rolling out new systems in the field

✓ **Security and manageability features.** To ease the burden of securing and managing devices in remote or harsh conditions, seek options with:

- A broad range of data security options and comprehensive remediation, as made possible by Intel® Core™ vPro™ processor technology
- Remote data deletion in case a device is lost or stolen
- Project management resources to oversee software migration, new system deployment, and user change

RUGGED MOBILITY

rugged notebooks. Choose models designed to:

- Withstand electromagnetic interference
- Conform to the military standards for blowing rain, explosive atmospheres, and drop protection up to six feet.

Next, consider the best data-entry options for each mobile application. Some professionals prefer traditional notebook designs with responsive keyboards and trackpads. Others, especially those who require the freedom of touchscreen navigation and data access while wearing gloves, will benefit from innovative “flip-hinge” convertible notebooks that easily transform into tablets whenever necessary.

2. Reliable, Accessible Support and Services

Ruggedized notebooks require more than sophisticated engineering — look for vendors that back devices with expert consulting and support services.

Deployment. Leading vendors offer services to help deploy new rugged systems quickly and efficiently while streamlining costs, reducing complexity, and minimizing the risk of downtime. Also essential is 24x7 access to expert support if problems occur.

Application management. The best service providers employ application factories to automate compatibility testing for Windows 8.1. These facilities can also package enterprise applications to standardize deployment and help clients manage their portfolios.

Migration management. Look for a team of experts with hands-on experience deploying modern Windows for mobile customers. Leading service providers can offer a project management staff to oversee all aspects of migration, new system deployment, and user change management.

3. Security and Manageability Features

Successful mobility hinges on bulletproof security to keep employees and intellectual property safe from armies of dedicated cyberthieves. Partner with vendors that have a track record for industry-leading security and control. When security is paramount, look for hardware options and services that:

- **Protect access** using sophisticated identity management tools while maintaining usability with smart card and fingerprint readers
- **Enable encryption** on devices, on external media, and in the cloud
- **Protect against advanced threats** with solutions for malware protection
- **Provide data deletion capabilities** when devices are lost or stolen

Choosing options that make use of the latest Windows OS can also help. For example, Windows 8.1 can automatically create virtual-private-network connections and quickly authenticate company

Productivity Advances

The combination of a modern operating system and advanced processors helps ensure productivity under any conditions.

To boost productivity, Windows 8.1 supports the full range of Microsoft Office applications, including Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote. Using the built-in OneDrive cloud storage system, mobile users can access their files and back up changes wherever they’re working.

Remote access IT manageability tools, powered by the latest Intel® Core™ vPro™ processors and Dell’s unique vPro™ extension, increase uptime and reduce support costs.

InstantGo2 provides a manageable Windows 8.1 desktop on a secure, bootable USB stick, so employees can work from anywhere on any device with a USB port.

Mobile broadband and enhanced data usage and metering in Windows 8.1 ensures that users are always connected while enabling IT staff to keep costs under control.

The security and touch-driven features in the latest Windows operating systems, matched with hardware security and processor power advantages, support the demands of the mobile age.

provisioned and personal devices on enterprise networks. Windows Defender, Microsoft’s free anti-virus technology, and SmartScreen protect against viruses, malware, and malicious websites.

Freedom, Without the Risks

Today’s mobile devices and apps give modern workforces the freedom to stay productive wherever their jobs take them. But freedom brings new challenges and risks. With ruggedized notebooks, expert consulting services, and an advanced operating system, mobile workers are free to do mission-critical work without restrictions.

>> Get Tough

The Dell Consulting Services team will tailor custom service solutions to deploy new rugged systems quickly while streamlining costs, reducing complexity and minimizing the risk of downtime. It offers workshops in application management, optimized deployments, and Microsoft Windows 7 & Windows 8.1. For details, go to www.dell.com/rugged.

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