

RuggedPCReview.com

If it's rugged, we review it and write about it

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In This Issue

Two new MCAs
 RMT SwitchBack
 DT Research WebDT 520
 RAM Mounts for Pana U1
 DRS ARMOR X1
 Tablet case study
 VIA VIPRO Panel PC
 CPU benchmarks
 Winmate video zone

At RuggedPCReview:

[Rugged Notebooks](#)
[Rugged Tablet PCs](#)
[Rugged Handhelds](#)
[Rugged Panels](#)
[Rugged Blog](#)
[Rugged Definitions](#)

Other recent additions

[Advantech AIMB-256 Mini-ITX](#)
[Fujitsu Lifebook U820](#)
[Fujitsu Lifebook P1630](#)
[Ingress Protection](#)
[RMT DAP CE8640B](#)
[Rugged waterproof displays](#)

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Greetings!

Thanksgiving week, and despite the challenging economic situation, things are actually looking pretty good in the rugged computing industry! Seems like a lot of companies out there realize they can save money through field service automation projects and switching to semi-rugged and rugged equipment that won't break so easily. It's all about Total Cost of Ownership these days.



In this issue we're welcoming [Winmate Communication](#) as a new premier sponsor, joining [Motion Computing](#), [Xplore Technologies](#), [Advantech](#), [DT Research](#), [General Dynamics Itronix](#), [Getac](#), [Juniper Systems](#), [MobileDemand](#), [RAM Mounts](#), and [RMT](#). They are the movers and shakers in the rugged industry.

Panasonic and Fujitsu introduce their own Mobile Clinical Assistant tablets



Panasonic and Fujitsu have joined market leader Motion Computing in the Mobile Clinical Assistant field with their own MCAs. Panasonic introduced the Toughbook H1 Mobile Clinical Assistant and Fujitsu the Espresso MA. Both newcomers use Intel Atom chips and seek to improve on the MCA concept with fanless designs and special attention to extra-easy cleaning and disinfection of the devices. Read a descriptions and specs of the [Panasonic Toughbook H1](#) and the [Fujitsu Espresso MA](#).

Unparalleled flexibility: the RMT SwitchBack

The RMT SwitchBack is a fully rugged Ultra-Mobile PC with a very compact footprint of 7.4 x 5.9 inches and weighing just over three pounds. A modular "BackPack" system adds almost unlimited connectivity and expansion. What sets



the SwitchBack apart is a unique processor architecture where a standard Intel processor is a peripheral to a Xilinx Virtex 5 FPGA platform that, with special programming, can perform complex, sophisticated tasks at record speed. Those who harness this power will find in the SwitchBack a compact, rugged machine of unparalleled flexibility. [Read full review of the [RMT SwitchBack rugged UMPC](#)]

Rugged panel computer: DT Research WebDT 520



There is an increasing demand for rugged fixed-mount/panel computers for use in forklifts, emergency vehicles, warehousing, marine and many other applications. We reviewed the very compact WebDT520 by DT Research. It is a cost-efficient rugged panel computer with a bright 12.1-inch touch screen, touch-optimized operation, good performance and excellent connectivity and expansion options. [See full review of the [DT Research WebDT 520 rugged panel computer](#)]

RAM Mounts for the Panasonic Toughbook CF-U1



RAM Mounts has announced a range of flexible mounting solutions for the Panasonic Toughbook U1 rugged ultra-mobile PC. RAM offers both a powered dock that adds three USB ports and additional connectivity, as well as a passive cradle. Each can be configured with a no-drill vehicle mount, with a Tough-Box console mount, with a clamp mount, or with a flat surface mount. [See description of [RAM's new mounts for the Panasonic U1](#)]

Ultra-rugged Tablet PC: the DRS ARMOR X1

We had a chance to spend a couple of months with the DRS ARMOR X10 ultra-rugged Tablet PC. The X10 is the latest version of a line of rugged pen tablets that goes back to the mid-1990s and has been continually improved over nine product generations. The new model shows an interesting mix of trademark design features and updated technology. The X10 has IP66 sealing, can operate within -4 and 140 degree Fahrenheit, and can be ordered with a touchscreen or an electromagnetic digitizer. [Read [review of the DRS ARMOR X10](#)]



MobileDemand Tablet PC increases productivity of beer wholesaler



The rugged Tablet PC specialists at MobileDemand issued a new case study, outlining the challenge Dale Lee Distributing Company, Inc., an Anheuser-Busch wholesaler located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, faced, and how MobileDemand offered a rugged Tablet PC-based solution that saved Dale Lee both time and money. [See [MobileDemand case study](#)]

VIA enters rugged panel market with the VIPRO VP7710

With touchscreens becoming ever more accepted by the public, Taiwanese core logic chipset and board maker VIA is branching out into the panel PC market with the VIA VIPRO VP7710 that can run Windows XP or an embedded OS. It's a compact, rugged, fanless design with a 10.4-inch display and good onboard connectivity. [Read description and specs of the [VIA VIPRO VP7710 Panel PC](#)]



Benchmarking: How do Intel's mobile processors compare?

Intel's Atom chips have unbelievably low power consumption even at fairly high clock speeds. Does that mean they are the perfect solution for rugged mobile systems that require both performance AND long battery life? To find out, RuggedPCReview.com ran benchmarks on a Atom N270-equipped computer and compared the results to machines using the A110 and ultra-low voltage Core Solo and Core Duo chips. How did the Atom do? [Find out how the Atom N270 measures up.](#)

WinMate product videos

One of RuggedPCReview.com's premier sponsors, Winmate Communication, is a big believer in using video to promote its products. They even set up a special Winmate Video Zone on RuggedPCReview. Check out the [Winmate Video Zone](#).

We're often asked what we see as the current trends and directions in the rugged computing industry, so here are some observations:

- Sunlight-viewable displays are becoming mandatory
- Low cost devices are switching to Intel Atom
- There is increasing demand for Solid State Disk options
- The WiMax issue remains unresolved
- The Mobile Clinical Assistant market is heating up
- Cost pressures increase mobile device adoption in the field



The picture on the right shows a GD-Itronix MR-1 computer used for email, on Mount Everest!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

Conrad H. Blickenstorfer
Editor-in-Chief, RuggedPCReview

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