

CASE STUDY

DURABOOK GOES THE EXTRA MILE WITH INDUSTRIAL VIDEO & CONTROL, PROVIDING A RUGGED LAPTOP THAT WILL GO THE DISTANCE IN THEIR MOBILE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

CUSTOMER

Industrial Video & Control (IVC)

CHALLENGE

IVC had discovered that the laptops in their MobileVision surveillance systems were a point of weakness in durability and availability.

SOLUTION

From the first contact with Durabook, IVC found Durabook to be very responsive and willing to work with them to identify the right rugged laptop for the MobileVision solution's computing requirements.



THE SITUATION

IVC's MobileVision surveillance solutions provide real-time monitoring when and where a customer needs it. These smaller, portable systems will have up to four high-quality video cameras and a mobile laptop computer that runs the video recording software, mounted on rugged trailers. The system is almost always deployed outside, in any kind of weather, and is likely to be taken off-road over uneven ground.

The trailer-mounted products will provide remote video surveillance for as little as a day or for as long as a year. When a police department, college, or industrial interest purchases a remote video surveillance trailer to watch over large public events, for emergency management, or to monitor for loss prevention over time, the stakes can



be high, and the terrain can be rugged. What's more, the remote video surveillance systems industry, though small, is ultra-competitive, so IVC is constantly evaluating and re-evaluating system components, including the rugged computing device that resides in its trailers. The minimum basic requirements are effectiveness, reliability, and durability.

Norman Fast, IVC CEO and co-founder, stated, "When we get failures of any component in the field, we get the parts back and we do an internal diagnosis with our engineering staff, and we determine the root cause of failure. And we found that the laptops were a point of weakness."

The computers IVC was initially using for its standard trailer builds weren't durable and the company had issues with reliability, having to replace computers and laptop chargers. IVC was also experiencing extremely long lead times from the laptop supplier for its law enforcement trailers, and the model they were using, the only one from the supplier that was in their price range, was about to go end-of-life.



CHALLENGE

IVC had discovered that the laptops in their MobileVision surveillance systems were a point of weakness in durability and availability. They sought a cost-effective and reliable, rugged laptop especially for the 'law enforcement version' of their system, which uses a more heavy-duty trailer and more rugged components overall. The laptop would have to keep

working through all potential perils of a deployment, including riding over rough terrain, temperature extremes, dusty environments, being exposed to harsh sunlight, rain, or snow, and the potential to be dropped. And IVC needed assurance that they could get the numbers of laptops they needed in a reasonable turnaround time.

THE SOLUTION

Factors for consideration for a better mobile computer included durability, the ability of the device to support video recording and management software, cost, warranty, prompt delivery at desired quantities, and the responsiveness and willingness of the vendor to work with IVC. Not a short, simple list. And Fast was up for doing an intensive search to find the best solution. "We really try to compete on the basis of quality, durability, and reliability. The people who are buying our trailers are looking for trouble-free operation."

Fast added, "You have shock and maybe some vibration as the trailer is transported or moved around. If taken to a construction site or off-road, the trailer is going to be bouncing around a bit, and that's where we like to think that our product really outperforms the competition, because we're building it with the knowledge that it may be used off the road, and we want to have the most durable components.

Jennifer Williams, director of sales for IVC's trailer division, observed, "We're familiar with all those companies that you commonly hear about when you think about rugged laptops, but we didn't want changing this one component to have a huge impact on our overall cost to the end user. Too many rugged laptops were outside the price range of what we were looking to stay within.

On the other hand, we know that some of our competitors are using little, small mini PCs that would be less expensive, but we don't want to do that, because in our experi-



ence, especially with customer support, having a display is necessary when you're out troubleshooting in the field, so that's why we like to stick with a laptop-style device for the network video recorder."

Williams came across Durabook at the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police show in July 2021. "What drew us to Durabook was the durability. When I first reached out, there were several email exchanges with Durabook directly," she said, "and they were really quick to respond, gave me the information for the S14I Rugged Laptop that most closely compared to the laptop we were using, sent me a price right away and made me very happy when they said they could ship in three to five days."

Durabook's "sell with" philosophy reflects its interest in seeing that its mobile computing solution supports the customer's customer. "Customers are often outside

"Failures in the field are costly to us, they're costly to our customers, and we used to have a lower-end model laptop that did experience some failures in the field. The Durabook S14I does not have field failures, so from a business point of view, this has been a win-win for us."

Norman Fast,
IVC CEO and co-founder



working on the trailer in the rain or when it's really sunny," said Williams, "so the sunlight-readable display and MIL-SPEC standards with the IP ratings were all pretty important things we took into consideration."

The Durabook S14I Rugged Laptop is built with a robust mechanical design and rigorously tested components. It meets MIL-STD-810H and can withstand up to a 4-foot drop. Its sunlight-readable display is Full HD 1080p with brightness enhanced up to 1,000 nits and light-filtering technology providing clear imagery. The laptop's IP53 rating means it is protected from limited dust ingress and from water spray less than 60 degrees from vertical.

"I would say anybody looking at a more durable laptop really should take into consideration the after-sale savings if they're oriented towards that. Some companies just sell and forget about it, but we're living with our products for not only the first year but several years. That's why the warranty's important, but the fact that we don't have to use the warranty is even more important."

Jennifer Williams,
Director of Sales
for IVC's trailer division

Williams requested a demo unit to fully evaluate the S14I, which Durabook was very willing to provide and, after Williams and other IVC personnel got some experience using the laptop, they were ready to go forward. Fast commented, "Our search was ongoing until we found Durabook. This was the most cost-effective quality solution. Cost and reliability are the key combination for us."

Although IVC's original intention was to just use the S14I Rugged Laptop as a replacement for its law enforcement trailer model, Williams said, "We were so satisfied with it that we ended up making that our standard across the board. So, even with our smaller models that we want to keep in a lower

price range we're still able to use the Durabook S14I because it fits within the pricing we were offering customers before."

THE RESULT

Quality, cost, and reliability are also very important to IVC's customer base, which includes many law enforcement agencies. Being able to rely on a surveillance system in the field saves a police department from having to put two or three officers on patrol. The trailer captures and records video around the clock and police department customers know the video is going to be there if something happens.

Williams remarked, "If there's an incident, and they go to pull that video and it's not there and they need it for evidentiary purposes that would be terribly embarrassing for the police department and for us. We don't have to worry about that using Durabook."

Williams shared that "We get questions about warranties very often. Our trailers are not inexpensive, so people are always concerned about warranties and ongoing support, and the fact that Durabook offers a three-year standard warranty and that we haven't had any issues with the laptops deployed in the field has been a huge benefit."

