

# RUGGED TECHNOLOGY HANDBOOK 2014



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## TOUGH ENOUGH

Industry thought leaders reveal why purpose-built products are still in demand across numerous vertical markets



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### Q HOW HAS THE MARKET FOR RUGGED TECHNOLOGY CHANGED IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, AND WHICH VERTICALS ARE DRIVING THE MOST INTEREST IN PURPOSE-BUILT SOLUTIONS THAT YOU RESELL?

**CAMPBELL:** The most significant change has been, of course, the explosive growth of personal mobile computers. Not too many years ago, mobile computers were the exclusive domain of the enterprise. Fast forward a few years and the consumer market for mobile devices has not only surpassed enterprise demand, but actually looms large over it. And the lines between personal and enterprise has blurred. When does my phone stop being my personal device and becomes an enterprise mobile computer? I certainly use it in both aspects of my life.

That same confusion has entered into the decision-making process for mobile solutions, with many consumers placing little value on the rugged MC value proposition. This is especially true with customers who are new to mobility. Those that have traditionally purchased rugged devices continue to do so, but the market for mobile solutions has grown far beyond the traditional market. Our role is to

educate ourselves on how to engage with a customer that is already familiar with mobile solutions and is bringing their own preconceived notions of how a mobile solution should look and feel.

**FARFANTE:** It is obvious to everyone that the mobile market has evolved significantly over the last few years, and the rugged market has been impacted in many ways from an end user expectation and needs perspective. The big trend we have seen is the significant increase in bandwidth inside the four walls and outside. This is a real driver of all mobile applications, and significant for rugged solutions in industrial environments. Applications that could not be implemented in industrial environments due to the remote field locations or dense industrial environments now can be productive due to 802.11 ac or 4G/LTE technology.

The other major change we have seen is the shift away from an exclusive Microsoft mobile operating system on rugged mobile devices to include Android and IOS. This has increased the number of platforms and devices available. It is crucial to pick the right enterprise platform, and the new complexity of multiple options has made it more difficult. From a solutions developer perspective, this has increased our costs because we are not able to support and develop for multiple platforms easily.

### Q WHAT NEW TRENDS IN RUGGED SOLUTIONS ARE SPURRING TECHNOLOGY SALES IN THE CHANNEL?

**CAMPBELL:** The most obvious trend is new hardware form factors that better represent what customers expect in a mobile device, such as touch-only interfaces and devices with larger screens. The transition to devices utilizing the popular Android OS is generating a great deal of excitement, especially in conjunction with the more modern feeling form factors. The newest trends in consumer devices are wearable computers. It's going to be an exciting couple of years as we see where the wearable market goes, but they will have an impact on the mobility market much sooner than I would have anticipated in 2013.

**FARFANTE:** In terms of pure rugged technologies, we are seeing demand for lower-priced rugged products with the Android operating system. The demand is being driven by form factor and applications first. We are seeing more ISV solutions in this space, for example, the WMS solution from Foxfire with Android mobile. We are selling both Motorola TC 55 and ET1. The second trend we are seeing is rugged tablets in the full Windows replacement space. This



allows for immediate full desktop replacement. A large rental company that we work with moved to mobile Windows tablets from Motion Systems to replace all depot and inspection systems in their enterprise, due to the information that can be gathered and managed at the point of inspection.

## Q WHAT SORT OF CONVERSATIONS ARE VARS HAVING WITH THEIR CUSTOMERS TO EDUCATE THEM ABOUT THE NEED FOR RUGGED TECHNOLOGY AS OPPOSED TO CONSUMER PRODUCTS?

**CAMPBELL:** It's important to acknowledge the rising expectations resulting from the widespread adoption of consumer devices. Consumers are bringing their own experience with mobile devices into the decision-making process, leading to choices being made based on criteria that are very different from what we are used to.

While widespread adoption of consumer devices has changed the look and feel of mobile solutions, they have also dramatically expanded the market for mobile devices, often in markets that have traditionally been underserved by the rugged community for one reason or another.

So, back to the question at hand; it is absolutely essential that VARs be able to articulate the ROI opportunities inherent to rugged mobility. Consumers have been trained by the telcos to focus on acquisition cost to the exclusion of everything else. Of course they want you to believe you only paid \$200

“WE WILL LOOK BACK IN MANY YEARS AND REALIZE THAT THE BEST THING THAT HAPPENED TO THE RUGGED TECHNOLOGY MARKET WAS THE ACCELERATION OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY THROUGH CONSUMER DEVICES.”

— DINO FARFANTE, AB&R

for you premium phone even if the TCO is significantly higher. Transitioning the conversation to one of TCO instead of straight acquisition is absolutely essential.

But TCO is only the start of the conversation. We have to have rugged solutions that measure up to the new, raised expectations. That means different devices running familiar operating systems. It means software solutions with a user experience that matches what consumers are used to. It means meeting the new mobile expectations of our customers.

**FARFANTE:** The key discussion we continue to have is the differences of cost of purchasing a device versus the total cost of ownership of a solution being implemented. These are two completely different measurements and vary significantly when measured over the life of a solution.

We have a client that currently has implemented thousands of rugged devices throughout North America and has devices deployed for over five to seven years. The next generation of the solution they requested is on a consumer device that has a planned lifecycle of two to three years. The hidden costs to support and replace have

not been planned into the decision and will impact long-term profitability.

## Q HOW HAS THE SPIKE IN INTEREST FOR MOBILE SOLUTIONS AFFECTED THE RUGGED TECHNOLOGY MARKET?

**CAMPBELL:** We are seeing new form factors and new operating systems. There is a dawning realization that the pace of product development and technological innovation is moving at an increasing break-neck pace. Rugged mobile is a very established market but it is going to take new ideas to keep up with the explosive growth in mobile solutions.

**FARFANTE:** The top-driving factor that we have seen in the market is the impact of consumer devices, handhelds and tablets. The requirements have shifted in ease of the applications being used, the device size and functionality, and the ability for the mobile worker to use rugged devices for multiple applications versus single purpose.

We will look back in many years and realize that the best thing that happened to the rugged technology market was the acceleration of mobile technology through consumer devices, but today it is a painful transition due to the impact on the average sales price, product margin and support issues. I believe that there is a place for consumer, semi rugged and rugged technology. The success of the solution will be the influence of a knowledgeable integrator that will evaluate the right technology for the right solution. **VSR**

“OUR ROLE IS TO EDUCATE OURSELVES ON HOW TO ENGAGE WITH A CUSTOMER THAT IS ALREADY FAMILIAR WITH MOBILE SOLUTIONS AND ARE BRINGING THEIR OWN PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS OF HOW A MOBILE SOLUTION SHOULD LOOK AND FEEL.”

— KEN CAMPBELL, SCANSOURCE POS & BARCODE

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COMPANY	PRODUCT	BUSINESS BENEFITS	KEY FEATURES
<b>Datalogic</b> datalogic.com	Lynx Ruggedized PDA	The Lynx PDA combines the latest mobile technology in a pocketable package. This state-of-the-art PDA features an 806 MHz processor with 256 MB RAM and 512 MB flash, all delivered in a rugged handheld form factor	Assisted GPS, 3G/4G (HSPA+) mobile radio, Summit embedded 802.11 b/g/n radio, Bluetooth, laser or wide aspect 2D imager, 3MP autofocus camera with flash
<b>Honeywell</b> honeywellaidc.com	Granit 1280iFR Scanner	Offers the ability to read barcodes from short and long distances, improving worker productivity in the distribution center and cold storage environments	Can read 100 mil. retro-reflective labels up to 54 ft. and 7.5 mil. codes from 3.5 in., can sustain more than 5,000 1m tumbles/50 drops from 2m, can operate in temps of -30 degrees C
<b>Motorola Solutions</b> motorolasolutions.com	Workabout Pro 4 Rugged Mobile Computer	The Workabout Pro 4 is ideal for voice picking, proof of delivery, vehicle maintenance and remote expert solutions that help improve productivity and customer service	Features modules capable of reading low frequency (LF), high frequency (HF) and ultra high frequency (UHF) RFID tags
<b>PioneerPOS</b> pioneerpos.com	Dash Rugged Tablet PC	Dash is the answer to the increasing need for mobility. The PioneerPOS Dash is ideal for solutions in the healthcare, retail, education, warehouse, field service or any other vertical requiring a durable mobile computer	Sealed against spill and dust, 2.65 lbs, sunlight readable, 10.1" screen, 4' drop spec, certified to MIL-STD-810G and IP54 NEVA 13, RFID, NFC ready, WiFi 802.11 b/g/n, Bluetooth 2.1, Microsoft Windows 7
<b>SATO</b> satoamerica.com	CL4NX Series Industrial Thermal Printers	SATO's first truly universal industrial label printer engineered for demanding printing applications	Full-color interactive LCD with videos, tool-less maintenance, plug-and-play, label tension damper system, uses wound-in or wound-out media, high energy mode
<b>Zebra</b> zebra.com	RW Series Mobile Printers	Designed for harsh outdoor environments, the modular design allows users to choose among wireless options, card readers, and integral accessories such as vehicle mounts for simplified route printing	IP54-certified for resistance to windblown water and dust, damage-resistant to multiple drops of up to 6 feet to concrete, weight of 1 1/2 to 2lbs, resistant to extreme hot and cold temperature