



City of Mishawaka Police Department Enhances Operations, Real-Time Communications & Situational Awareness



CHALLENGE

In 2007, the city of Mishawaka, IN Police Department decided to purchase mobile bay units for more efficient record management. Then, in 2014, they found themselves in need of an upgrade. Across the agency, officers were using a number of different versions of their previous rugged laptops and, given their small IT staff, they sought a solution that would require as few maintenance updates and repairs as possible. The city prides itself in supplying officers with the best possible equipment, so they wanted to ensure that any solution they deployed would deliver the lowest total cost of ownership in light of their tight budgetary restrictions as a government entity.



SOLUTION

After using workstations where devices were built into their vehicles, the Department wanted to assign the new devices directly to individual officers for added convenience. The agency considered a 2-in-1 device not only for flexibility during officers' day-to-day activities but to ensure they could access their devices even when vehicles were

undergoing repair. Following careful consideration, the agency chose the TOUGHBOOK 33, as its durability and flexible design offered the potential for officers to boost their efficiency when it comes to tasks such as reporting and running a variety of software and applications. Panasonic's ProServices support was also key to help support the agency through the deployment process, working with the Department's unique version of CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) to design a custom configuration.



RESULT

Since deploying one hundred eight TOUGHBOOK 33 units on a 1:1 device-to-worker ratio, the Mishawaka Police Department has experienced better efficiency, productivity and situational awareness. Each officer can leverage the device for his/her unique responsibilities whether it's tasks in the field such as crash reporting and issuing citations for traffic, or parking violations, conducting interviews and organizing training sessions. One of the most significant productivity benefits has been among detectives, as they can bring the device to interviews and record directly to the device to streamline the transcribing process. The TOUGHBOOK 33 has also enabled the Department to conduct remote roll calls, helping officers stay connected with headquarters while engaging in their community work. The officers were also able to disinfect the devices at the end of each shift without compromising device performance. Since deployment, the Department has seen so much success with the devices that the city's fire department is now looking to deploy Panasonic solutions in its own apparatus.





The City of Mishawaka, IN Police Department is committed to serving its community and prides itself in supporting officers with the best possible technology to give them the maximum time to interact with the community. While the Department deployed mobile bay units in 2007 for this purpose, by 2014, the equipment needed upgrading. Across the agency, officers were using different models of the same device, which made upgrades and repairs time-consuming for their small IT team. As a government entity with tight budgetary restrictions, the Department needed a solution that promised 7-10 years of longevity so they could maximize their investment.

After evaluating many options, the Department chose to deploy the TOUGHBOOK 33 given its proven longevity and flexible 2-in-1 design that aligned with its goal of assigning devices to individual officers, as opposed to each vehicle. They have deployed one hundred eight units to each officer on staff.

The Department experienced a seamless deployment process and has since encountered zero issues. Panasonic's support services helped the agency work with its unique county-wide version of CAD, which previously had trouble connecting with the device's GPS. Using the feature would have required the Department to purchase extra parts in order to mount each device to their respective vehicles, which would have been challenging from a budgetary perspective. However, Panasonic's support team was able to devise a configuration that worked for the system, at no extra expense.

Since deploying the TOUGHBOOK 33, the Mishawaka Police Department has greatly benefited from added efficiency and productivity. From conducting citations and crash reporting to scheduling and awarding overtime, the device has streamlined operations for all members of the Department whether they spend their days out in the field or at a desk. Officers are able to use the state's e-ticketing and crash reporting software no matter where their duties take them, in addition to accessing their email, scheduling and training software. Supervisors leverage the device to create and award overtime, while instructors benefit from the ability to manage their training materials.

"It seems that every time we turn around there's something new that we're adding to the laptop that we never did before," said Lt. Haimbaugh of the Mishawaka Police Department. "It's a time saver for officers because they don't necessarily have to come into the station to access a desktop computer whether they need to simply look something up on the Internet or complete a required training session."

One of the most significant productivity boosts the Department has seen has been among detectives, as the TOUGHBOOK 33's performance level allows them to access their critical video analytics software. Further, the 2-in-1 design works well for their schedule since they can use it as a desktop when present in the station and take it on the go with them. Before the TOUGHBOOK 33, detectives had to transcribe their interviews upon returning to the office. Thus, the ability to carry the device with them and record directly onto it, has significantly enhanced their efficiency.

"The city has always prided itself in supplying the best possible equipment for officers all the way through to the technology we're putting in the cars," said Lt. Haimbaugh. "We hear horror stories from departments in neighboring areas who have different equipment, and whether it works or doesn't work depends on the day."

When it comes to our officers, all of their equipment needs to work all the time. We have that confidence with Panasonic TOUGHBOOK products, more so than a lot of our neighbors do with competitor products.

— Lt. Haimbaugh, Mishawaka Police Department

Additionally, the device has proven useful in helping the Department manage social distancing to keep officers safe. Normally, officers would gather in the station at the start of each shift for roll-call. However, to maintain social distancing, they leveraged the TOUGHBOOK 33 to conduct roll call remotely. The TOUGHBOOK 33's strong connectivity allows officers to access their email and scheduling software to view assignments no-matter their location.

"This process prevented a mass exposure from developing," said Lt. Haimbaugh. "It gave us confidence, especially from the management side that any particular day wasn't going to take a group of officers out of the equation. That turned into a huge efficiency when all is said and done."

The durability of the TOUGHBOOK 33 also allows officers to disinfect the device after a day of interacting with different members of the community. Ultimately, the TOUGHBOOK 33 has enabled the Mishawaka Police Department to enhance its efficiency both in its day-to-day responsibilities and in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

TOUGHBOOK

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CASE STUDY

