

CASE STUDY: Turner Warburton Solutions

If you're working half a mile underground in the harshest of conditions, you can trust Tegatech's rugged Tablet PCs to keep on ticking.

Turner Warburton Solutions develops specialised document management systems for the mining industry, allowing engineers to carry an office full of documents under their arm. TWS co-founder Trevor Warburton was born and bred in mining town of Broken Hill, so he appreciates the tough conditions that Tablet PCs endure when working at minesites on the surface or underground.

"We first developed an asset management system based on rugged PDAs, designed for mining companies to track fire extinguishers, first aid kits and chemicals used down in the mines, then evolved it into the 'SavYou Solution' for managing Explosive inventory movements and usage." says Warburton.

"The second client we sold the SavYou Explosive tracking system to also expressed an interest in converting all their documents to an electronic form and making them portable - because it consumes a lot of time to come up from the mine to pick up your paperwork. A small-screened PDA isn't really designed for such a task, so we started talking to Tegatech about the best Tablet PCs for taking down the mines."

As well as handling the rough and tumble of life underground, Warburton required Tablet PCs designed to handle wide temperature fluctuations as well as the highly corrosive atmosphere of a damp mine. He worked closely with Tegatech, trialling several Tablet PC options, before deciding that the Xplore Tablet best suited TWS' requirements. "Ruggedness was naturally the highest priority, but performance was also important," he says. "No matter how tough a tablet was, if it wasn't capable of displaying documents in a reasonable amount of time then it was useless. Miners can't afford to stand around all day waiting for their computer to catch up."

"We couldn't go smaller than the 10-inch screen size, because any smaller and you have to spend too much time scrolling the document around to see everything. Jump to 12-inch display and the units were becoming too big to be portable and convenient. The other key issue was good battery life, because obviously these tablets are going to be away from charge points for hours at a time."

The Xplore Tablet is built around a bright 10.4-inch, 1024x768 display - running Windows XP Tablet Edition with a 1.2 GHz Intel U2500 Dual Core processor under the bonnet. The tablets weigh in at 2.35 kg and offer a 4 to 5 hour

battery life, generally enough to make it through a full shift on one charge. They're designed with shock, vibration and dust tolerance in mind, as well the ability to survive moisture and temperature extremes.

"The great thing about working with Tegatech is the company wasn't just trying to flog us a few tablets, they worked closely with us to ensure we found the right tool for the job. Tegatech's extensive knowledge of the Tablet PC field ensures we get the best solution available, and that benefit flows on to our customers," Warburton says.

"Tegatech provides the best range of products in what is a niche category. Not a lot of suppliers sell devices that meet our specifications, and certainly not at the prices that Tegatech is able to offer. The most important factor would have to be the amazing level of customer service. After discussions regarding our requirements, Tegatech supplied us with several different test units to trial, until we arrived at the Xplore Tablet - which gave us the best results in terms of ruggedness, performance and price."

"If I'm going to send a Tablet PC down a mine I need to have confidence that it's up to the job. I place that same confidence in Tegatech to provide us with the best Tablet PC solutions."



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