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## Top 5 Tips for Choosing Mobile Computers

Rather than trying to stay on top of all the products that are being introduced and discontinued, enterprises can quickly cut down to a few viable options by following five basic tips:

**1. Consider the Environment and the User;** The most important factor to find the right fit for an enterprise mobile computer is the environment in which it will be used. Drops are the leading cause of damage to mobile computers and are the leading cause of resulting damage and downtime. Understanding how the computer will be used is also very important. Even a small, lightweight computer can be awkward to use during processes that constantly require workers to lift or pull items, so voice/speech input would be valuable because it provides hands-free data entry so workers can keep their eyes and hands on the task. Overall size and weight are important, but choosing the best device isn't as simple as selecting the smallest and lightest.

The shape of the computer, how its weight is distributed, and how easily workers with different sized hands can carry the device and access the keypad are important considerations that shouldn't be overlooked. Mobile computers with integrated bar code and RFID readers, radios and other peripherals may weigh more than those without, but they provide an ergonomic advantage because the worker doesn't have to carry and manage multiple devices.



**2. Stick to Industry Standards & Certifications;** Rugged mobile computers are specialized devices designed for collecting data and providing real-time information in non-office environments, but they should still adhere to enterprise standards for connectivity, security and development whenever possible. Specifying devices that meet these criteria will help keep down development, integration and support expenses, which can vary greatly and are a significant source of TCO. Specifying devices with a Microsoft mobile operating system, particularly Windows Mobile®, is the best step organizations can take to keep development, implementation and support costs in check. Standardizing on the Microsoft environment gives organizations the widest choice of packaged software applications, ISVs, systems integrators, development tools and device management systems, plus provides a clear migration path for future upgrades and expansion.

**3. Simplify Support;** It is important not only to consider the workers who will use mobile

computers, but those who will support them. Management features can be a major differentiator between consumer-oriented and enterprise-grade mobile devices. Because they are designed for large deployments, enterprise mobile computers often have built-in features that streamline provisioning and deployment, enable remote, no-touch troubleshooting and configuration changes, and otherwise allow proactive management. Changes to applications and device configurations are inevitable, so standardized systems and remote management capability are key to keeping mobile device populations consistent and optimized. Remote management is especially important for mobile devices deployed for field based and other off-premise operations because workers do not have ready access to spare equipment. Productivity losses can be very high if devices or applications lock up or fail to work in those environments. Therefore, there is strong value in the ability of IT support staff to remotely troubleshoot devices, so they can be returned to service without having to be returned to a central service location.

**4. Require Flexibility;** Rugged mobile computers can withstand drops, shocks, humidity, heat, cold, rain, snow and even occasional vandalism, but often they can't survive a change of mind or business requirements. The leading reason mobile computers used in industrial, retail, distribution and service environments are replaced is not damage or device failure. Instead, most mobile computers are replaced because they are considered technologically obsolete and can't support desired information systems, software applications or business processes. To avoid this unnecessary expense, it is important to select mobile computers that can change with the organization and provide a platform for future enhancements. Bluetooth connectivity in the mobile computer provides powerful protection against obsolescence when peripheral needs change. Enterprises don't always know the types of peripherals their future operations will require, so it is hard to plan device requirements around them. Bluetooth makes it easy by providing a flexible, standard interface for integrating thousands of different peripheral devices. Besides mobile printers, Bluetooth connectivity is built into bar code readers, headsets for both VoIP telephony and voice/speech-directed systems, scales, sensors, GPS receivers, computer docking stations and many other peripherals that serve enterprise needs.

**5. Pay Attention to Power;** Power management is a very important (and often overlooked) feature of mobile computers because it directly impacts uptime and user productivity and acceptance. Power management should be evaluated beyond what's on the spec sheet. Organizations should develop usage models that outline how much the mobile computers will be used and which capabilities (e.g. bar code reading, wireless communication) will be used so power requirements and performance results from pilots or other testing can be factored into the mobile device selection. Expected battery life is only a starting point for comparing mobile computers. Differentiating factors include whether data is lost if the device loses power, how quickly batteries are recharged, whether the charging dock prevents overcharging (overcharging causes batteries to lose capacity more quickly), the maximum number of times batteries can be recharged, whether the mobile computer provides intelligent power management to limit its battery consumption, and if extended-life batteries are available.

**Conclusion;** Many mobile computers can quickly be ruled out from consideration because they lack the battery power to last the length of a shift, or lack the staying power to remain reliable throughout a three-to-five year life cycle. Features like rugged construction, well supported operating systems, standard interfaces, remote management support and flexible peripherals provide value by protecting organizations from having to replace their mobile computers prematurely. By understanding how these features differentiate devices, and by carefully considering the environment in which mobile computers will be used, organizations will be able to determine which specific models will provide the most value.

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## Is Time Theft Robbing You Blind?

Time theft costs American businesses hundreds of billions of dollars each year. This results from employees who "steal" from their employers by willfully wasting time for which they are paid. Leading authorities on employment issues have conducted numerous surveys relative to time theft and concluded that the average employee "steals" approximately 54 minutes per day, or 4.5 hours per week, from his/her employer. This totals nearly six full workweeks per year! You could be losing more than 10% of your payroll through the following forms of time theft:

- Late arrival or early departure
- Requesting paid sick days for inappropriate reasons
- Excessive socializing and personal telephone calls
- Using Company time & facilities to operate another business
- Slowing down the work pace to create overtime
- Taking long lunch hours and breaks
- Handling personal business at work

Time theft is not confined to any one type of person or industry. It applies to "white collar" and "blue collar" employees in every type of business, institution, profession and governmental agency. It occurs in every organization with a payroll.

The majority of executives surveyed state that permanent employees steal more time than temporary employees. Also, the greater the employee's seniority, the greater the chance they will steal time from their employer. Office personnel steal more time than manufacturing employees, and employees under thirty years old tend to steal more time than older employees.

What does this mean to you? You are being robbed of hundreds, maybe thousands of dollars per year. While much of this lost time is very difficult to control, eliminating time theft due to late arrivals and early departures can add profits to your bottom line.

Employing time and attendance systems can greatly reduce your losses due to time theft by eliminating the practice of coming to work late, leaving early, and taking a few extra minutes at lunch. Many products are capable of ringing a bell or horn to signal the beginning and the end of breaks which will reduce employees extending their breaks by several minutes. Some companies use time and attendance products simply as a "behavior modification" device to constantly enforce the notion of best practices as it pertains to work day requirements.

Loyal employees are proud of their attendance records. Many systems have been sold to satisfy loyal employees who complain about other workers coming in late and leaving early. If time theft is allowed to continue, it is very likely that your loyal employees will begin abusing your time, rather than using their own time. This is simply human nature, "If he can do it and get away with it, then so can I." In this respect, a time and attendance product can make employee reviews much more positive.

Time theft unabated can be construed as a benefit. If you do not keep accurate time records and you or your payroll manager knowingly allows employees to have a minute or two here and there, then it may be hard to explain when you try to reprimand or fire someone for being late. By using an automated time and attendance system in your business, you can be sure that you are receiving accurate and indisputable time records where favoritism is not a factor.

In addition to reducing time theft, automated systems provide one or more of the following benefits:

- Increases Production

- Eliminates Disputes Regarding Pay
- Provides Record of Opening and Closing Times
- Accelerates Payroll Preparation
- Eliminates Favoritism on Part of Timekeeper
- Provides Legible Records of Hours Worked
- Improves Relations with Employees
- Enforces the Work Schedule
- Proves Compliance with Wage-Hour Legislation
- Establishes Respect for Time
- Provides Time Records that are Honored by any Court of Law
- Enables the Correct Calculation of Product or Service Costs

As the value of the minute increases, so does the need for more accurate attendance and job cost records.

For additional information or assistance, please email Tony Cook [tonyc@datapronw.com](mailto:tonyc@datapronw.com) or call (888) 658-6881 or (509) 532-3530 ext 315

## Microsoft Upgrade Promotion

The Upgrade Plus Promotion allows small and medium business (SMB) customers with up to two previous (N-2) versions of existing desktop platform licenses to upgrade to the Windows 7 operating system and Microsoft Office 2010 with a low initial cost, up to 50% off the first annual payment when you enroll in Open Value Subscription.

When you include Software Assurance, you ensure your company always have the newest software available. Along with Software Assurance, your Open Value Subscription allows you to true-up or true-down the amount of licenses or add products to your agreement each year so that you are only paying for what you need, when you need it.

### Description:

Open Value Subscription customers are eligible for the Upgrade Plus Promotion during the first year of their subscription agreement. Qualifying customers may acquire the Microsoft Office and Windows 7 Up To Date license identified below if they are licensed for one of the corresponding qualifying prior or current versions. The Microsoft Upgrade Plus offer is available from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010.

### Qualifying Existing Versions (N-2):

Office Professional Plus Edition 2010  
 Office Professional Edition 2010  
 Office Enterprise Edition 2007  
 Office Professional Plus Edition 2007  
 Office Ultimate Edition 2007  
 Office 2007 Professional Edition  
 Office 2003 Professional Edition  
 Office Small Business Edition 2007 (or Professional edition)  
 Office 2003 Small Business Edition (or Professional edition)  
 Office Standard 2007  
 Office Standard 2003  
 Windows 7 Professional  
 Windows Vista Business  
 Windows XP Professional

### Discounted Products (Upgrade Options):

Windows 7 Professional  
Office Professional Plus 2010

Purchase After: 07/03/2010  
Purchase By: 12/31/2010

For assistance in finding the right Microsoft products and solutions that fit your needs, please call  
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