



## CASE STUDY

# Hoover

When Hoover invested in technology to help its repair and service engineers provide industry-leading customer service fit for the future it chose Panasonic Toughpad tablets. The rugged touchscreen device helps the engineers deliver the high standard of service that Hoover customers expect

**Client: Hoover**



To deliver on its vision of world class customer service with industry leading service and repairs, Hoover chose to upgrade its field service application and the mobile devices its engineers were using.

The company had implemented its FieldAssist service management system in 2002 alongside Panasonic Toughbook CF-M34 and later Panasonic Toughbook CF-19 rugged notebooks for the engineers. "In 14 years we only had to replace the Panasonic Toughbook devices once, so they had more than exceeded our expectations," said David Hunt, Business Support Manager, at Hoover Ltd. "But our field service management system needed updating to provide the engineers with the tools they would need in the future to continue to deliver industry-leading customer service."

After reviewing their options, Hoover decided to upgrade its existing FieldAssist service management application to the latest Windows 10 version and develop its own bespoke modifications to meet its needs. The upgrade also provided Hoover with the opportunity to re-examine its choice of mobile device for the engineers.

### **A rugged tablet solution**

"The new functionality of the FieldAssist application allowed us to look at a smaller, and lighter touchscreen tablet device for the engineers, rather than a notebook. The point, click and menu-based options of the application meant a tablet solution would be ideal," said David.

The Hoover team reviewed a wide range of devices and spoke to business customers that had deployed a wide variety of tablet solutions. "At first we thought we would choose a cheaper device but when we looked at the evidence, many of these devices, even with protective casings, were lasting just two years in the field," said David.

"We knew from our experience with Panasonic that its rugged devices would last at least 5 years, if not six or seven, even with the knocks they receive in the field. When we did the total cost of ownership calculation, it was clear that the Panasonic Toughpad tablet was the right choice."

**Deploying to 180 engineers**

Hoover is deploying the Panasonic Toughpad FZ-M1 Value tablet with bar code reader and Near Field Communication (NFC) capability to its 180 field engineers. The engineers use the device to schedule their appointments for the day. The FieldAssist application with the Panasonic device can use the customer's address with the satellite navigation system to schedule the quickest route to the appointment. The engineer completes their job sheet using the device, can use the camera to photograph and digitally attach images to the report and order parts as required.

In addition, the device is used by the engineers for email and internet access, including access to Hoover's online engineering knowledge and diagnostic database.

The information and reports are shared in real-time with the office-based systems using 3G/4G or Wi-Fi connections.

To ensure the Panasonic devices are future-proof, the NFC functionality will allow engineers to read chips in future Hoover products for faster diagnostics and repairs.

**Initial fears overcome**

Fitting into a cushioned central pocket in the engineers' tool bag, the Panasonic devices have been generally well received by the team. "The devices are lighter and easier to use once the engineers become used to them," said David. "Initially there was concern that the screens would be too small to see diagrams, for example, but this fear was quickly overcome when the engineers saw the clarity of the screen and the ability to zoom in using the touchscreen. The always on tablet is also an advantage over the old notebooks. It is faster for the engineers to use and more efficient and professional when using with customers, asking for a signature on the device, for example."

**The ideal field tablet**

The Panasonic Toughpad FZ-M1 Value tablet is ideal for industry sectors using field applications and looking to replace their ageing business PDA's or notebooks. The device, with its energy efficient and mobility-designed Intel Atom processor, is an affordable and flexible mobile solution. With its capacitive, 10-finger multi-touch display flexible configurable ports and business expansion capability this Windows 10 Pro device can be used in the field whilst benefitting from connectivity options to ensure data is always available when needed.

