

CASE STUDY

USING TECHNOLOGY TO SERVICE TECHNOLOGY HOW FORD'S MECHANICS USE DURABOOK TO MAINTAIN THEIR 'ROLLING COMPUTERS'

Tough, functional and designed for top performance - the Durabook ruggedized laptop and the Ford vehicles it helps to service

CUSTOMER

Ford Dealers
New Zealand

CHALLENGE

A large format rugged laptop ideal for car mechanics to run diagnostic software to service modern 'rolling computer' cars

SOLUTION

Durabook S14I with its 14" screen is easy to use for data entry, analysing multiple diagnostic data, and tough enough for use in the workshops

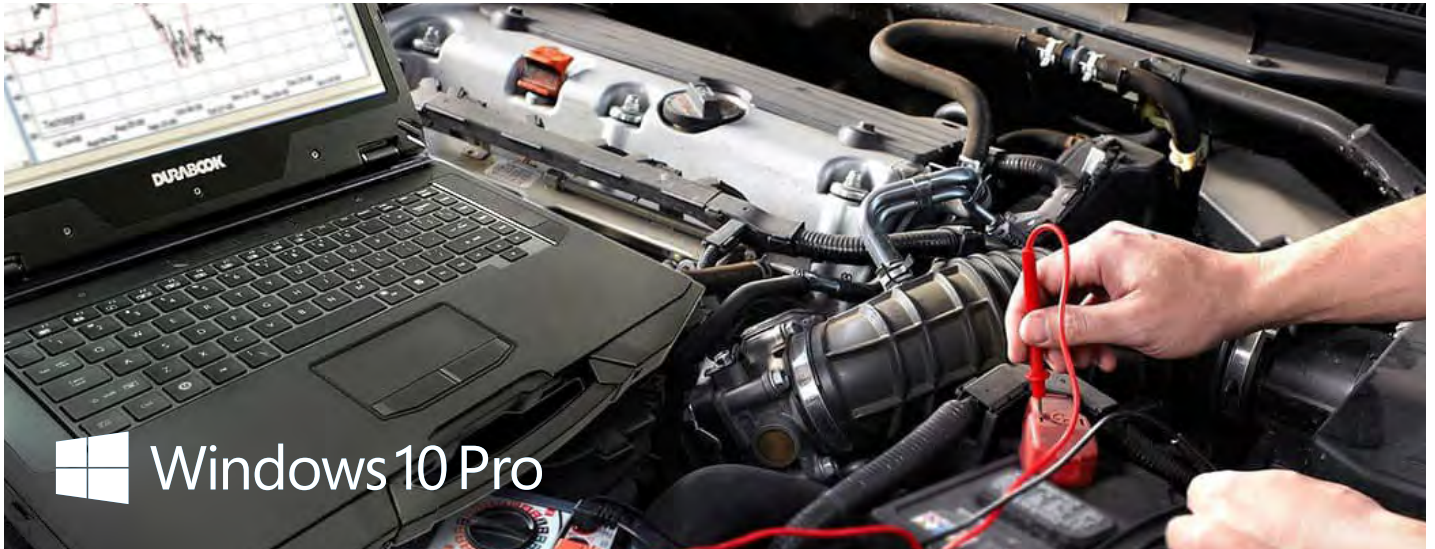


"My vehicle is a rolling computer", said Jim Hackett, soon after being appointed CEO of Ford Motor Company. "My business is computing."

It's a fact that the average family car now has more computing power than the rocket that sent men to the moon. Even relatively modest cars have computers controlling the sound system, locks, navigation system, and engine emissions.



S14I Laptop



COMPUTERS TO SERVICE 'ROLLING COMPUTERS'

Mechanics need to be able to interrogate the vehicles computer, make adjustments and upgrade the software. You're just as likely to see a mechanic with a laptop or tablet in his hand, as you are a torque wrench.

Ford engineers use Durabook's ruggedized laptop to service their vehicles. They connect to the cars computer and use Ford's Vehicle Communication Module software to run diagnostics, analyse live data, read information from the sensors, change key parameters and upgrade the software. This process can be done wirelessly, or via USB connected to Durabook's ruggedized and IP rated ports, which enables secure connectivity for cabled diagnostics.

"Our service bays are pretty clean, but it's impossible to completely avoid dirty hands on the touchscreen. A conventional tablet or laptop just didn't cut the mustard for our environment."

Tung Kung,
Field Service Engineer Ford NZ

THE MOTOR WORKSHOP - A TOUGH ENVIRONMENT

It's a demanding environment for any device as Tung Kung, Field Service Engineer for Ford NZ, attests: "These devices are handled and moved around a lot", he says, "from the driver's seat, to engine bay, to sitting on a tool box. Inevitably, they get bumped and have to be able to withstand knocks and drops. Our service bays are pretty clean, but it's impossible to completely avoid dirty hands on the touchscreen. A conventional tablet or laptop just didn't cut the mustard for our environment."

Ford explored the different options available, of both traditional and specialist technology, to find a device that met their needs. "We chose Durabook after running a trial where we tested a range of devices – as we needed something much tougher," says Tung.

THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB

A large screen size is another crucial factor. Chris Simms, foreman at Bay Ford Hastings here the trial took place, explains: "The screen on the devices we previously used were too small for the amount of data our technicians need to view – we need a large touchscreen, a keyboard and fast performance. When we explained the problem to the expert, they recommended Durabook and

offered us the S14I laptop to test."

Not only is Durabook tough, the product portfolio also offers best price and performance compared to any of the devices trialled.

Chris found the Durabook S14I to be a high performing laptop that did everything he and his team needed. "It's definitely faster than what we had before and the 14-inch screen makes it a lot easier to read the graphs and diagnostic data. It can take the knocks and bumps of a busy workshop and the keyboard is a really good size for quick data entry. Switching was a good decision."

Ford Dealers have tested and approved the Durabook S14I for use by the Dealerships. Tough, functional and designed for top performance - the very words that could be used to describe Ford vehicles - also applies to the technology now used to keep them in peak condition.

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Chris Simms,
Foreman at Bay Ford Hastings

DURABOOK

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