Getac

Utilities

/ Case Study /

Keeping the lights on all along the coast demands the best in rugged mobile computing - Getac E100

/ Challenge /

Faulty street lamps pose problems for everyone from pedestrians to motorists and when they fail in town centres it can cause security problems. When your job is to maintain a quarter of a million streetlamps – as part of Europe's largest private finance initiative – you need computer technology that you can rely on, wherever you are.

/ Solution /

The E100 fully rugged tablet is now being used by maintenance crews of Scottish and Southern Energy, who maintain 250,000 street lights for the local authorities covering Hampshire, West Sussex and Southampton City regions. The E100's wireless connectivity enables the company to transfer a wide range of data back and forth between the company's offices and the crews.

/ Advantages /

By using the E100, the crews have improved their response times dramatically and this has helped the business operationally. It has also allowed the company to get better data on all of its streetlamps and their condition, so that planning has improved.

/ Scottish and Southern Energy Contracting /

The Getac E100 is helping Scottish and Southern Energy Contracting deliver a terrific service for its customers

"This technology allows us to get better data, allows us to make more informed decisions on how we are going to run our business and on how we are going to spend our money. Response times are key to everything we do and if we can reduce those response times, then obviously that is helping us operationally," explains Ian Reynolds, Operating Support Project Manager for SSE Contracting.

/ Getac E100 /
Fully Rugged Tablet

Rugged Mobile Computing Solutions

/ Challenge /

Faulty street lamps are not just irritating, they can be dangerous because they hide trip hazards for pedestrians and make the public difficult to see for motorists. They also pose problems for society as a whole and can increase security and the fear of crime.

When you are running the largest Private Finance Initiative in Europe, looking after 250,000 street lights and responsible for changing 175,000 of them within the next five years, then you need to be able to rely on the best rugged computer technology.

This is one of the most sophisticated street lighting maintenance and replacement contract of its type in Europe, with Southern Electric Contracting (SEC) required to maintain a quarter of a million street lamps across the south coast of England.

SEC is part of Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), and the company now looks after street lights for the local authorities in Hampshire, West Sussex and Southampton.

"The logistics of a contract this size are mindboggling and the only way it can be handled is through computerisation," says Ian Reynolds, explaining that on average the crews complete around 23 jobs during the course of a shift.

/ Solution /

The company has issued Getac E100 fully rugged tablets to the crews which operate around-the-clock maintenance and response service. The computers are used to despatch job instructions, allow the crews to report back on jobs, and enables SSE to transfer data seamlessly back and forth between the company's offices and the crew's vehicles out in the field.

"With our own software applications we used to report response times in terms of days, but now, with the new computers, we are able to consider different metrics such as hours or parts of a day because our response times have come down so much," adds Reynolds.

"This technology allows us to get better data, allows us to make more informed decisions on how we are going to run our business and on how we are going to spend our money," he explains.

The tablets themselves are fully rugged which means they are completely sealed units with all the ports sealed by covers. Being a fully-rugged device, they do not have a fan but can still operate fully from between -20°C to 60°C. The E100 will therefore work in all environments and offers field staff all the performance they need. Integrated GPS and 3G gives the crews a complete solution for their application and the 800 nit LED panel – which is the brightest on the market – allows the crews to read the device even in direct sunlight.

/ Advantages /

Peter Molyneux of Getac said: "It is difficult for companies that have very specific requirements to marry those with an off-the-shelf computer, and we're always very happy to try to find a solution that works for them.

"Our advantage is that we have the flexibility to provide customers with the computer they need, with functionality matching their precise requirements, rather than simply provide them with the computer that we want to sell them."

"I know that SSE are delighted with these computers and are already figuring out how to make them work even harder, so we look forward to working with them in making even stronger gains in response times, the provision of good data, and efficient operations. They are focused on delivering a terrific service for their customers along the South Coast – and for members of the public – and I am very pleased that Getac can make a contribution to that."

Ian Reynolds is quick to agree: "Response times are key to everything we do and if we can reduce those response times then obviously that is helping us operationally, it is helping the members of the public and it is helping local authorities with their image with the public.

"Using these devices has helped tremendously and we have been able to reduce the response times dramatically," he adds.

/ Scottish and Southern Energy Contracting /