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GD-Itronix introduces the GoBook MR-1 ultra-mobile notebook
GD-Itronix has released the GoBook MR-1, a fully rugged Windows ultra-mobile notebook that measures just 6 x 4.5 inches and is about an inch and a half thick. The MR-1 is powered by a 1.2GHz Intel Core Solo processor, can accommodate 1GB of 533MHz DDR2 RAM, comes with a shock-mounted and heated 40GB disk (80GB available), and has a brilliant, razor-sharp 1024 x 600 pixel 5.6" SVGA-W with the GD-Itronix DynaVue technology that provides superb outdoor viewability. The MR-1's magnesium chassis and housing is sealed to IP54 standards and can take as much punishment as the company's fully rugged XR-1 notebook. The MR-1 can be ordered with as many as four integrated wireless systems (three radio plus GPS), including 3G high speed services. A clever "slice" expansion system allows for expansion via stackable modules. [Read full review of the GD-Itronix MR-1 ultra-mobile notebook] - Posted Monday, June 11, 2007 by chb

Added: Talla-Tech rugged: RPDA-57 and Tacter-31M
We've added descriptions and specs of two rugged handhelds from Tallahassee Technologies. The RPDA-57 is a rugged Pocket PC running Windows CE 5.0 on a PXA270 processor. It is extremely flexible with a variety of modular backs. The Tacter-31M is a very compact full Windows machine available with either a 6.4-inch display or a XGA 10.4-inch screen, both sunlight readable. In June of 2007, Tallahassee Technologies received a \$18.5 million purchase order from the US Marine Corps for the RPDA-57. [See descriptions and specs for RPDA-57 rugged military Pocket PC and Tacter-M31 rugged Windows handheld computer] - Posted Monday, June 11, 2007 by chb

Feature: What Type of Flatscreen Should I Get?
Even if you're mostly mobile, you want a big easy-on-the-eyes flatscreen to do work in the office and at home. Technology Editor Geoff Walker analyzes the current LCD flatscreen market, explains concepts and advantages and presents his recommendations and choices, including three Editor's Choices. [Read Flatscreen Should I get?] - Posted Monday, June 11, 2007 by chb

Identec merges GPS and RFID in GPS Tag
Identec Solutions announced the release of the first independently intel satellite assisted tag that can isolate the specific location and movement. The GPS Tag has a read/write range of almost 2,000 feet and can be used at any time with a reader, providing increased ease of access and reducing infrastructure. Self-tracking, the GPS tag uses satellites in combination chart its route and movement. Once within range of a reader, the tag provides information of the assets movements. Use of this technology is well suited for asset or personnel tracking application, and in particular for container transit. The receiver will be able to ascertain the exact route and journey.

Rugged Slates and Pen Computers
Perfect for when you don't need a keyboard
Slate computers are full-function Windows machines without a keyboard. The entire computer is built into a slate like enclosure that is as thin and handy as possible. Since they don't have a physical keyboard, slate use password or active pens for input. The pen is used both to replace the mouse or joystick for navigation, and sometimes when its actually enter text.
Slate computers may use a passive digitizer that can be operated with a stylus or a more or less Active digitizer (equipped by Microsoft's Windows XP Tablet PC Edition) use an electromagnetic digitizer with a special pen. Some pen slates, such as products from Itronix or Xplore, can switch between passive and active digitizers. All pen slates have on screen keyboards or you can, of course, connect a standard keyboard.
Slate computers are perfect for many field applications where low weight and maximum portability are crucial. Some slates weigh barely more than two pounds. Others are heavily sealed and ruggedized and can be used in almost any environment.
A variant of the "pen" slate computer is the notebook "convertible." Convertibles are standard notebooks with displays that twist and then lay down flat on top of the keyboard/trackpoint unit, converting the notebook into a slate computer, which is relatively heavy one.
Today, Tablet PC slates and convertibles are increasingly successful in many industries, in business, and even with consumers.
A bit of slate computer history
In the late 1980s, early pen computer systems (powered a lot of excitement and there was a time when it was thought they might eventually replace conventional computers with keyboards. After all, everyone knows how to use a pen and there's no need for an intimidating keyboard.
Pen computers, as envisioned in the 1980s, were built around handwriting recognition. In the early 1980s, handwriting recognizers were seen as an important future technology. Nobel prize winner Dr. Charles Ebbasum started Nestor and developed the Nestor/Visiter handwriting recognizer. Commercialization Intelligence Corporation created the Handwriter recognition system, and there were many others.
In 1991, the pen computing hype was at a peak. The pen was seen as a challenge to the mouse, and pen computers were seen as a replacement for desktops. Microsoft, seeing slates as a potentially software competition to Windows computers, announced Pen Features for Windows 3.1 and called them Windows for Pen Computing. Microsoft made some bold predictions about the advantages and success of pen systems that would take another ten years to even begin to materialize. In 1990, product oriented 3D Corporation released PenPoint. Lotus released the Longhand handwriting recognition system. Microsoft released Windows for Pen Computing. February 1992 and 1994, a number of companies introduced hardware to run Windows for Pen

- Daily industry news
- Information and reviews on
 - Rugged notebooks
 - Slates
 - Tablet PCs
 - Rugged handhelds
- Definitions and specs
- Ruggedness testing
- Industry leader info
- Ranked #1 in Google search for "rugged PC"

Ruggedness testing procedures
Laboratories and torture chambers
When you need your industrial and mobile computers, you will eventually come across a lot of ruggedness testing and specifications. Rugged this and suggest that, but actually don't know, and how to "rugged" measure? The general idea is to "rugged" in the context of a computer's ability to withstand an environmental environment it will be expected to be on the job. It is a test for "Ruggedness" (measured by a number of military grade criteria standards, but it's often difficult to figure out what exactly stands behind the terminology on a product spec sheet or marketing material). In addition, some rugged products were released over the years that turn out to be very rugged at all, unlike some that more like vintage products that pretend rugged equipment.
Over the last few years I had a chance to personally see the ruggedness testing facilities of some of the industry's leading vendors and manufacturers. I spent a day at the Intel Internet of Things (IoT) Center in Santa Clara, California. Intel is now Panasonic's environmental testing lab for its Toughbook computers outside of Korea, Japan, and India. Intel's IoT Center is located in Santa Clara, California. When I saw the tour of Intel's facility, I had never actually seen a ruggedness testing lab and thought that most manufacturers probably sort their equipment to some extent. In fact, they don't get a check with a need of approval from the lab. That was definitely the case at Intel. I had no idea to what extent ruggedness testing is done on the products we see for sale.
Intel's testing lab is the basement of an entire building and could not be described as anything but a torture chamber or dungeon for electronic equipment. There were rows of test chambers designed to subject a computer to just about any kind of punishment conceivable, and then some. There were salt spray chambers to simulate moisture in the air. There were temperature chambers, where the test chamber cooled down and then heated again. There were several vibration tables that helped to "simulate" rough roads from a city to a dirt road with broken shock absorbers. There was a totally noise room that looked like something out of a horror movie.

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1 Full reviews of every major product

WalkAbout Hammerhead Xtreme
8th generation Hammerhead continues long tradition of excellence in a rugged slate computer

This is a review of the Hammerhead Xtreme rugged slate computer. It is a design that was created, and continues to be fostered, by WalkAbout Computer, now part of CRS Tactical. This is a machine with much history, and so a somewhat detailed introduction is in order. However, below is a picture for those who can't wait to see what it looks like.

WalkAbout
Almost anyone who has been following the rugged mobile computer industry is probably familiar with the WalkAbout Hammerhead, the ultra-rugged pen computer milled from a solid block of metal. It is one of those timeless designs that came out right just from the start, and there never was a reason to change the basic design of this truly marvelous

2 Capsule reviews and specifications of all products

GETAC CA27
Rugged tablet PC slate

GETAC was established in 1985 as a 50/50 joint venture between General Electric and Taiwanese Mitac. The company specializes on rugged notebook PCs and tablets for all-purpose, industrial, and military use. Sold as a "Ruggedized Tablet PC" and now optionally equipped with an active Wacom digitizer, the CA27, while still compact, is larger and more substantial than the picture suggests. It is a full-function PC in every respect, from a mobile low-voltage Pentium Dothan processor to a full complement of built-in ports, to a notebook-style "X-Bay" that can accommodate a variety of drive and wireless options.

Thanks to a magnesium alloy housing, the CA27 can take a beating, and despite its many ports achieves an IP54 rating. A port replicator provides additional USB ports in addition to legacy serial PS/2 and parallel port support. The CA 27 is also available with a sunlight-readable display. View the GETAC CA27 as a ruggedized, full-function notebook computer without a keyboard (GETAC offers wireless keyboards with pointing devices both in standard and ruggedized versions).

Specifications	
Added/updated	Updated 03/2
Form-factor	Rugged S Tablet PC ED
OS	Windows XP Professional
Processor	Intel Pentium M Dothan
CPU Speed	1.6 GHz, 400 MHz F
Chipset	Intel 855
Standard/Max RAM	256MB/1024
Disk/Drive	40GB shock-mount 120GB and low-temp ha opti
Card slots	1 PC Card 159 Transmisione TFT (styl readable optic
Display type	10.4-inch/1024x
Display size/res	Touch screen or opti
Digitizer/pen	Wacom
Keyboard/screen	Optional external wire
Ruggedness	IP54, 3-foot drop, 0-Magnesium alloy, sei p
Housing	11.7 x 9.4 x
Size (WxHxD)	5.1 lbs w/o batt
Weight	Li-Ion 4,400mAh (opti 2nd batt
Power	1 USB 2.0, CCD USB, 222, IR, d
Interface	802.11b/g, 56K modem, various wirel radio options via X-LAN, IEEE 1394, U-GPRS, GSM/GSM, BT
Communications	Inc
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Rugged computing industry leaders

General Dynamics Itronix Corporation
Implementor of wireless, rugged mobile computing solutions

General Dynamics Itronix Corporation is a world-class developer of wireless, rugged computing solutions for mobile workers, which distinguishes itself in the market through its technology innovation, superior implementation capabilities and customer support services. Itronix has a full range of wireless, rugged field computing systems, from rugged handhelds, to its award-winning line of rugged GoBook laptops and Tablet PCs, in addition to providing its widely acclaimed iCare Implementation Services that range from project planning and management to first line help desk support. Itronix serves mobile workers in markets, such as commercial field services, insurance, communications and utilities, government, military, public safety, transportation, and telecommunications.

With customers that include hundreds of Global 2000 companies with network diverse work environments and world recognized organizations, such as Sears, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marines, FBI, Verizon, and Florida Power & Light, Itronix is one of the world's leading providers of wireless, rugged mobile computing solutions. According to recent research by Venture Development Corporation (VDC), Itronix is currently ranked the number one fully rugged notebook computer provider in Europe and number two in North America.

Itronix News
GOBOOK XR-1 WINS LAPTOP MAG EDITOR'S CHOICE
Itronix Corporation, a General Dynamics company, announced that the GoBook(R) XR-1 laptop has earned the highly coveted Editor's Choice designation from LAPTOP Magazine in the rugged computing category. The computer, which received a 4-star rating, is featured in the March 2007 issue of LAPTOP. -- Posted Tuesday, February 20, 2007 by i10

ITRONIX INTRODUCES GENERAL DYNAMICS GOBOOK XR-1 FULLY RUGGED NOTEBOOK
Itronix, a General Dynamics company, today introduced the General Dynamics GoBook XR-1, the world's smallest and lightest fully rugged wireless notebook. The GoBook XR-1 elegantly combines rugged features with high-performance computing, comprehensive wireless capabilities and unmatched security features in a product designed to perform in mobile outdoor environments. The new rugged device is the first Itronix built laptop to carry the General Dynamics brand since the company was acquired by General Dynamics last year. The GoBook XR-1 will begin shipping in September 2006. -- Posted Monday, August 14, 2006 by i10

GOBOOK VR-1 LISTED IN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FEATURE
The semi-rugged Itronix GoBook VR-1 was mentioned in the first of a two-part series looking at the latest advances in emergency communications at emergencyresponse.com. The feature was a reprint from the August 2006 issues of Emergency Medical Services and highlighted advanced communications hardware and software available for today's emergency providers. -- Posted Wednesday, August 2, 2006 by i10

ITRONIX NAMED TOP IT SUPPLIER BY SEARS
Itronix, a General Dynamics company, has been recognized by Sears as "IT Supplier of the Year" and as a "Partner in Progress" award recipient for 2005. Itronix received the awards for supplying Sears with exceptional help desk support for its field service

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