



## Rugged Toughpad FZ-X1 puts computing power in the hands of parking enforcers—rain or shine

### AT A GLANCE

#### The Challenge

gtechna was searching for a rugged handheld tablet that would let parking and traffic enforcement officers perform their jobs more efficiently and in all types of weather. The tablet had to have enough computing power to support Gtechna's electronic ticketing software on the Android 4.2.2 operating system.

#### The Solution

Panasonic released the Toughpad FZ-X1. The 5-inch handheld combines military-grade toughness (including a 10-foot drop resistance) with premium features such as a bar-code reader, a daylight-readable display, a high-resolution camera, a 14-hour hot-swappable battery, and a sealed, all-weather design (IP65).

#### THE RESULT

Using the Toughpad FZ-X1, parking enforcement officers can now do their jobs faster and more effectively come rain, shine—or snow.



**gtechna**  
eCitation & Permit Software

Like everything else, parking is going high-tech. There's "Park and Pay" as well as "Pay by Plate" technologies including "Pay by Phone" and "Pay by Kiosk"—for starters.

It's still possible to spot officers "chalking" tires but, increasingly, parking enforcement is becoming more sophisticated. Today, officers have to be knowledgeable about multiple parking management and enforcement systems and need the right tools to do the job.

Since 1993, Gtechna has been helping North American municipalities make sense of the parking technologies patchwork. The Montreal-based firm creates "e-citation" (ticketing) software that integrates various parking technologies into a single enforcement system. Once its software is loaded onto a rugged handheld tablet, parking officers can capture data from a vehicle electronically.

## The Missing Link

A few years ago, the company hit a snag while it was developing its software for Android's 4.2.2 operating system. "We're continually pushing the technology envelope and we were doing so with Android," says Mike Bourre, Gtechna's vice president of sales and marketing. "We had created powerful software that lets officers quickly scan or enter a vehicle's license plate number to determine if a driver is in violation—but we couldn't find a rugged handheld device for Android."



There were plenty of consumer smartphones on the market that would support Android, but Gtechna needed a water-resistant handheld that could endure extreme temperatures, long work shifts, and inevitable drops on concrete—and still perform to a T.

Gtechna was already very familiar with Panasonic's Toughbook 54, a rugged laptop computer that it packages with its software and sells to police forces. So when Bourre heard that Panasonic was releasing the five-inch Toughpad FZ-X1 for Android, he and his team crossed their fingers and tested it out.



Panasonic's Toughpad FZ-X1 couldn't be a better fit for us, says Mike Bourre, Gtechna's vice president of sales and marketing. It not only supports our specialized software applications, but it also pairs military-grade toughness with the richness and functionality of a consumer smartphone.



## ABOUT GTECHNA

Founded in 1993, Montreal-based Gtechna builds software applications for parking enforcement and public safety departments throughout North America. Its Android e-Citation software unifies parking enforcement technologies into an integrated parking management solution.

It passed with flying colours.

“The Toughpad FZ-X1 couldn’t be a better fit for us,” he says. “It not only supports our specialized software applications, but it also pairs military-grade toughness with the richness and functionality of a consumer smartphone.” Among the Toughpad FZ-X1’s key features are a barcode reader; a robust, 14-hour hot-swappable battery; a sealed, all-weather design (IP65); a glove-enabled, daylight-readable display; and a high-resolution camera. The Toughpad FZ-X1 has also been certified for use in hazardous locations and its durability has been rated using U.S. military standards (MIL-STD-810G). Add a Bluetooth printer and the device can even print parking tickets.

## Fast, Seamless Integration

Integrating the Toughpad FZ-X1’s many features with Gtechna’s enforcement software couldn’t have gone more smoothly for the team. “We simply put the software on the device and it worked out of the gate,” says Bourre. “It was that simple. We didn’t have to make any code changes or modify our standard software—unlike in the past with other devices.”

But if there’s one feature that sets the Toughpad FZ-X1 apart for Gtechna, it’s the device’s ability to support License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology, which lets officers capture information from a vehicle’s license plate (by scanning or entering the plate number) and use that

information to search a database to determine if a driver has paid for parking. “We were the first software company in the parking market to load LPR software onto a rugged handheld,” says Bourre. “Combine that with the Toughpad FZ-X1’s high-res camera and it’s a big differentiator for us in the marketplace.” As a result, officers can do their jobs faster and with greater accuracy.

For one of Gtechna’s customers, a large metropolitan parking authority, the Toughpad FZ-X1 couldn’t have come sooner. Its officers had been using regular cellphones loaded with Gtechna software, but the phones hadn’t held up. Their batteries wouldn’t last a shift. In rain, their touchscreen wouldn’t work; in winter, the phones would freeze.

The authority recently purchased 55 Toughpad FZ-X1s from Gtechna. Officers love them, says the authority’s chief technology officer, and nothing currently compares to the Toughpad FZ-X1’s durability, military-grade toughness and battery longevity.

Goodbye chalk, hello Toughpad FZ-X1.

**TOUGHBOOK**