

Increasing public safety with mobile IT access

Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office improves officers' efficiency and reduces their time in the office with a Dell Rugged laptop solution that also cuts costs and IT service windows in half



Local Government

United States

Business needs

To boost officer efficiency by adopting more digital tools and workflows, the Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office needed to equip field-patrol vehicles with new rugged laptops that can withstand extreme conditions, reduce maintenance windows and provide quick, seamless access to diverse applications anytime, and from any location.

Solutions at a glance

- [Dell Latitude Rugged laptops](#)
- [Dell EMC ProSupport Client Suite](#)
- [PowerEdge FX servers](#)

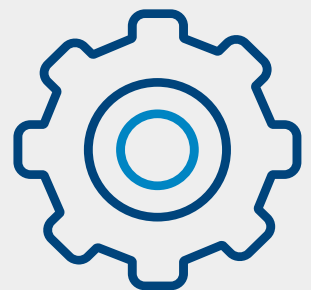
Business results

- Halves client device costs
- Gives officers more room in their squad cars
- Halves IT service response times
- Simplifies IT manageability

Increases officers' time in the field



Improves officers' efficiency



Technology provides an arsenal of critical law-enforcement tools that increase officers' insight, communication and response times—and, in turn, public safety. The most effective departments depend on laptops in vehicles to serve as centralized hubs for accessing applications and digital workflows that facilitate dispatch calls, deliver insight into DMV and police records, enable real-time video review, and support automatic backups of data from body cameras and tasers. However, if departments don't choose the right laptops and supporting infrastructure, officers may end up spending more time in the station to access all the applications and information they need.

A superior solution that halves costs

The 70 officers in the Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office in Virginia protect 43,000 citizens. For years, field officers have been using Panasonic laptops in their squad cars to access core applications. However, the devices were nearing end of life, and they needed to be replaced. So the agency sought new laptops that can withstand extreme conditions and deliver seamless access to an increasing number of applications, including those supporting body cameras and smart tasers.

After evaluating new offerings from Panasonic and leading vendors including Dell, the agency decided to switch platforms and deploy Dell Rugged laptops. Sergeant Mitchell W. Vernazza, crime prevention and search and rescue coordinator at the Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office, says, "In an age where we demand higher-caliber equipment and are facing tighter budgets, the Dell Rugged line is a great solution. Devices from other vendors are significantly more difficult to use, and they cost twice as much. The service we get with Dell ProSupport is also far superior to what we've had."

New platform—same docking stations

To avoid having to purchase new docking stations for cars, Dell retrofitted the vehicles' existing Havis stations with a plate so they work with the new laptops. As a result, when officers leave their vehicle, they can use their familiar docking solution to remove and re-anchor devices. "This was an easy solution for us," says Vernazza. "By using our Havis solutions with Dell Rugged devices, all cables and wires can be installed in a very clean way, and we can deliver single-button, on-and-off operation. Our staff love this."

"We're facilitating a workforce transformation, and the hub of it is our Dell Rugged platform."

Sergeant Mitchell W. Vernazza
Crime Prevention and Search and Rescue
Coordinator, Shenandoah County Sheriff's Office

Giving officers a safer and roomier cab

No one likes the feel of a crowded car, especially when driving fast. “The previous devices limited the space in vehicles, and the cabin felt cramped,” Sergeant Vernazza says. “Today, officers can see their mirrors better because the Dell Rugged laptops are not as tall, and they are three-quarters the thickness of our previous devices.”

Transforming officers’ workflows and efficiency

With Dell Rugged devices, officers are more efficient. “The touchpads on the previous laptops were difficult to use and constantly frustrated staff,” explains Vernazza. “The Dell units are very responsive and much easier to use. Also, their touch screens do not get that hazy anti-glare that we see on other devices after just a short time.”

Other capabilities of the Rugged laptops support more-seamless workflows as well, and, in some cases, greater insight into case work. “There are many little things about the Dell Rugged laptops that officers like, such as the color-changing keypads and the number of easily accessible ports,” Vernazza says. In addition, the devices support letterboxing, so officers can view the entire picture captured by an HD video device. Without this capability, content from the edges of every frame is automatically cut off so the video fits the screen, deleting information that could be important for clues and evidence.

Halves IT service response times and simplifies tasks

In the past, laptop repairs took 10 to 12 days. Today, the process takes half that time. “We get next-day parts with Dell ProSupport, and if a device needs to go to the service center for repair, the turnaround is just 5 to 7 days, which is twice as fast as our other laptop platform,” says Vernazza. The new laptops are also easier to manage. “Some tasks no longer require the expertise of an IT employee. The interface of the Dell Rugged laptops is so straightforward that it’s very clear how to manage the BIOS, security features and driver updates.”

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Expanding a solid platform into the data center

The Sheriff's Office recently engaged Dell EMC for a converged solution that provides the needed performance and scalability for the agency's records management system (RMS) and Axon Fleet taser solution. Plus, the new infrastructure simplifies management by consolidating two server nodes, a storage array and two I/O modules in one Dell EMC PowerEdge FX2 chassis with one Dell Networking switch at top-of-rack for connectivity. "We needed cutting-edge technologies," Vernazza explains. "Dell EMC delivers that, and it provides excellent customer care. Our Dell representative was here when the equipment arrived and made sure everything was installed and configured properly. I also know I can pick up the phone and talk to him at any time about technologies. It's that kind of support that makes a real difference."

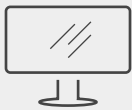
Extends officers' time in the field

By implementing Dell Rugged laptops in cars as well as the converged, highly modular Dell EMC infrastructure in its data center, the agency is better equipped to protect citizens and make the most of tax-funded budgets. "We're facilitating a workforce transformation, and the hub of it is our Dell Rugged platform," Vernazza says. "Officers can now access critical web-based applications from their cars including our RMS and taser software, which further boosts their efficiency and keeps them out patrolling streets for longer periods of time."

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