



CASE STUDY

Panasonic TOUGHBOOK indispensable for CIRCET field service engineers

Circet is the European market leader in building and maintaining the vital telecom fiber optic networks. In the energy world, they focus on smart energy, such as charging stations for electric vehicles and digital electricity meters in office and residential buildings. Circet Benelux is an installation company for all major players in the market. Especially in the smart energy business unit, the company makes widespread use of Panasonic's TOUGHBOOK notebooks and tablets.

Client: Circet

Location: Benelux

The 75 EV technicians use these TOUGHBOOK computers in all weathers to configure charging stations on site, among other things.

"The added value of a TOUGHBOOK is not only in their ruggedness and waterproofness, but also the serial access ports inside are very important. TOUGHBOOK has all the necessary software to facilitate field engineers in their work. Mind you, there are lots of different brands of charging stations and each brand has different types. All these brands in turn run on different software platforms that evolve over time. TOUGHBOOK devices have the advantage that they run on Windows from which different types of software can be installed, modified, updated or rebooted in the different brands and types of charging poles. In addition, it is possible to write scripts in Windows in advance so that the technician only activates the necessary script and does not have to program at the pole. These benefits make interventions faster, less error-prone and easier for the technician. So, that all together was a very important aspect of choosing TOUGHBOOK. Also, the different types of hardware ports in a TOUGHBOOK prove their added value in such a diverse playing field. Before purchasing, we also certainly looked at competing computers and tablets, but Panasonic's TOUGHBOOK notebooks and tablets stood out head and shoulders above them on all these fronts."

Christopher Kyndt

Operations Director Energy.

Circet



24/7 operating service

Circet's installation technicians are on the road every day installing charging stations and then connecting them to the meter box with a cable. Next, they configure the software in the charging station. For example, can only the owner of the pole charge their car? Or can their visitors or even third parties do the same with their own pass? That can all be arranged in the software. A technician installs an average of two charging stations per day. Once installed, the poles require hardly any maintenance, but of course they are still electrical devices that can break down. Especially the public charging stations are heavily loaded.



"That's why we have a 24/7 operating service that fixes hardware and software failures on site. Depending on the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and nature, failures are given higher or lower priority, but we always try to solve the problem within 4 to 48 hours. Once on site, the technicians connect their TOUGHBOOK to the charging station for an initial diagnosis. This allows them to investigate the settings of the charging station software to detect and then fix the problem. Finally, the mechanics use their TOUGHBOOK to log off the charging station in question via an online connection to the back office. They note in the system exactly what they replaced or adjusted. The TOUGHBOOK tablets can take photos and videos that, along with the necessary details, are easily put into a report and shared with the various parties. The technical back-office staff can watch online with the mechanics to provide additional support if needed. With video application also come the first applications of AI. During an intervention, via a body/tablet cam, the AI software can watch along with the mechanic and support him in certain analyses. These are again new steps to support the mechanic even better and serve the customer optimally."

Christopher Kyndt

Operations Director Energy.
Circet



Performance and partnership

At Circet software is a spearhead.

Kyndt: Our service cruiser platform is the digital backbone of all our operations. This is where we put the appointments with the customers, but also the end users themselves. This gives us a dynamic planning tool with the necessary details to get everything right the first time. Through the TOUGHBOOK, we share all information directly with the mechanics in the field. This allows us to do our work there successfully and safely. Moreover, the tablets are very reliable. In the period we have been using them, not a single intervention has been aborted because a tablet went down or had a flat battery. That has never happened before. So on all these fronts Panasonic succeeds for us with flying colors! Given the rapid developments, we naturally also keep an eye on the devices of the competition. There will undoubtedly be similar devices on the market sooner or later. But it is also about partnership. Panasonic offered us solutions in the past and present that others could not and cannot offer. Moreover, it is nice to work with a partner who is developing systems today that we will need tomorrow."

