

## Showerproof

ATTRACTING eyes to the Getac range of rugged and semi-rugged PCs was this laptop machine (right) which spent the show under the shower, yet still found the resources to run Windows. With half a dozen basic formats, from a tablet PC to a choice of notebook designs, the company has machines to suit a wide variety of markets, with wireless options which include GPS and 3G. Among them is the V100 convertible model, whose swivel screen allows it to be used as a laptop or, with a stylus, a tablet. Getac's cus-



**Getac's 'ultra rugged' A790 computer: it has sealed ports and connectors and a removable, shock-mounted hard drive**

tomers include government, police, military, field service and industrial users.

ENQUIRY NUMBER A55

## Versatile, Intrinsically Safe wireless PDA

ECOM Instruments, which specializes in Intrinsically Safe (IS) devices, showed its i.roc x20 (-Ex) PDA, a compact Windows Mobile 2003 machine based on HP iPAQ technology modified by Ecom Germany. Light, ergonomic and rugged, dust-proof and waterproof (with an IP65 rating) the device is designed for productivity applications in industry. It is in use with numerous companies around the world, from pharmaceutical manufacturers to petrochemical operators such as Chevron and Shell.

Communications capabilities include integrated WLAN, USB,

Bluetooth and an infrared port as standard. An internal RS-232 port provides an interface for optional read/write modules or communication modems.

### Reading barcodes

An optional RFID module can be added for scanning active or passive tags, and a barcode imager module can read common barcode types, both linear and 2D, directly. Complete labels can be captured by the built-in CMOS camera. Handwriting recognition is included for verification of data.

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## Ready for work with a built-in printer

TO BE launched shortly by TouchStar, the mobile PC specialist, is the Kestrel – an all-in-one hand-held PC complete with a quarter-VGA screen and built-in printer. Suggested applications in-

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**For point-of-sale use, including van sales, the Kestrel computer, with built-in printer. It will also have a chip-and-pin slot for cards**

clude point-of-sale transactions, in the van or on foot.

Among its features and options are USB, infrared, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and GPRS connectivity plus GPS, but the machines will be equipped to meet customers' own requirements. "That's why we don't have built units sitting on the shelf", explains Simon Beard. The Kestrel, he says, is easy to use, especially the printer – you simply place the paper roll under the cover and close the lid. Its battery, he adds, lasts a full eight hours.

## Rugged multi-function PDA

INTERMEC was celebrating a successful year which has brought some big retail and field automation projects, for customers such as BSKyB and the supermarket chain Morrisons. At the focus of much of this interest is Intermec's CN3, a Windows Mobile 5 handheld which is offering customers a robust alternative to consumer grade devices.

With its built-in colour camera for capturing images such as proofs of job completion, and its satellite navigation capability, the CN3 is several devices in one. Another feature is its multi-mode radio capability, embracing GPRS, GPS, Bluetooth and 802.11. "This is the only rugged released product with integrated GPS", claimed Nick Trower. "It has a four-way radio board which has

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**Intermec's CN3 combines a wealth of communications options with office functions such as push email and a turn-by-turn satellite navigation capability**

really taken the market by storm."

His colleague Paul Carrington added: "It has been remarked on in the industry as the rugged device of choice. It can handle different applications in the field and in the warehouse – it seems to tick all the boxes. Companies now value a device which can do a number of applications because it's easier from a support point of view."



**Using a stylus, Mark Roach, of the software developer Workwise-online, annotates a photo he has taken with this smartphone. "What we've found is that people want to communicate in pictures", he explains**

## Collaborating with on-screen notes

VEHICLE and asset tracking specialist Digicore presented its C-track system, widely used among local authorities and the utilities and now accounting for some 230 000 tracking units deployed worldwide. Sharing the stand was its mobile data partner Workwise, whose software suite supports a wide range of fleet-oriented functions, including PDA mobile data applications, job

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dispatch, status messaging and field data capture – notably photo capture, a facility with many potential applications in activities such as field service and healthcare. Uniquely, Workwise's software now enables the user to capture and share an image, annotating it on the screen with hand-drawn sketches and captions. This ability, the company believes, significantly expands the potential for collaborative working.