

BUSINESS

SEMI-MONTHLY 357,430
JUL 15, 2002



TRENDS FOR THE MODERN TRAVELER www.americanwaymag.com

BY BETH SNYDER BULIK

TECH-KNOW

ADVENTURE-WORTHY LAPTOPS

Need a rugged computer? How about one that can be completely immersed in water, baked in an oven, dropped from a moving car window, shot by a bullet, and then still boot up? Lately, durable computer makers have been powering up and scaling down in an effort to reach business users with resilient computer needs. With their sleeker and more stylish chassis, don't be surprised to see these models appear in a different kind of jungle — the urban one.

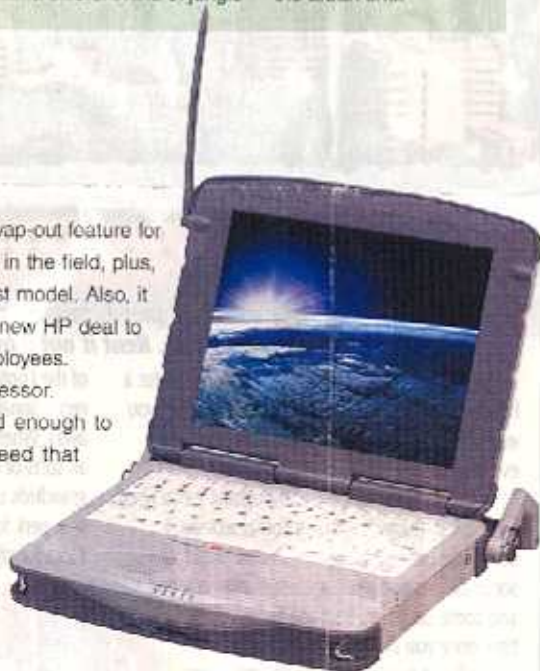
ITRONIX GOBOOK MAX, \$4,995

PROS: Comes with a cool wireless swap-out feature for changing modems and/or networks in the field, plus, at just over 6 pounds, it's the lightest model. Also, it is taking more market share with a new HP deal to resell notebooks to government employees.

CONS: Only offers a Pentium III processor.

BOTTOM LINE: Expensive, but rugged enough to withstand a typhoon, so if you need that kind of coverage, this is the model.

MORE INFO: www.gobookmax.com



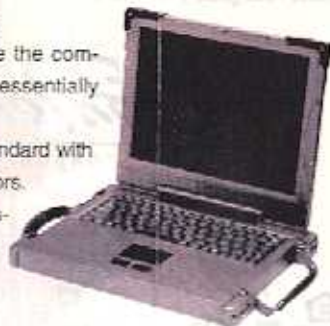
KONTRON MOBILE COMPUTING REVOLUTION, \$5,000

PROS: Great feature that allows the user to release the computer screen to become a touch-screen tablet, or essentially a large handheld, in a couple of seconds.

CONS: Only a Pentium III processor, and it comes standard with 10GB hard drive, versus 20GB or 40GB for competitors.

BOTTOM LINE: While the features may need to be customized and added for upgrades, the tablet take-away ability more than makes up for that.

MORE INFO: www.kontron.com



PANASONIC TOUGHBOOK 48, starting at \$2,200

PROS: Intel Pentium 4 chip makes it the fastest of the Toughbook computers and it has the now-almost-standard Smart Card security feature. Also has wireless local area network capability.

CONS: More like a rugged business model than one you'd really want to shoot a bullet through.

BOTTOM LINE: For the occasional field worker and extra peace of mind, the features offered at this price can't be beat.

MORE INFO: www.panasonic.com/toughbook

FACTS & FIGURES

\$11.9 billion

Cost of damage to laptop computers in 2001

10.5%

Of all portable computers in use were damaged, up from 8 percent in 1999

SOURCE: Technology Business Research