



Go ON UK

Go ON UK is the UK's leading voice on the digital skills agenda, and is aiming to help everyone in the country reach their digital potential. There are still 10.5million adults in the UK who are without Basic Digital Skills, and the charity is working to lower that figure. They believe that everyone in the UK should have the opportunity to learn the Basic Digital Skills – such as communicating, searching and transacting online – needed to enjoy the benefits that the internet can bring.

Created by Baroness Lane-Fox in 2012, Go ON UK has been behind successful campaigns across the country. Go ON North East, Go ON NI, and most recently, Go ON North West have targeted specific regions and those individuals and organisations within them who are without Basic Digital Skills.

They have also created digitalskills.com to inspire and support digital champions – those people who help others to take their first steps online. Visitors to the website will find resources to help learners, as well as events, projects, organisations and other opportunities in their area.

With just 15 staff, accomplishing all of this is no easy feat – so possessing a robust and reliable means of communication is essential.

As the charity's initiatives gained momentum and led to staff spending increased amounts of time travelling and working remotely, it became apparent that they needed simple, portable devices to ensure they could keep projects moving, regardless of their location.

“The more traction Go ON UK gained, the more the team was required to work away from the office,” recalls Aaron Donnell, IT Administrator at Go ON UK. “The laptops we were using didn't lend themselves to the more flexible ways of working that were required of them. For example, they were heavy and cumbersome, and unable to cope with multitasking, which was far from ideal for staff that needed to travel and manage their workloads on the move. We knew we had to invest in devices machined for mobility.”

The requirements

Go ON UK wanted to enable staff - from project managers, to the CEO - to efficiently communicate and collaborate with colleagues while away from the office, and regardless of a readily available WiFi connection. The organisation's IT Manager also worked on a part time basis, meaning staff had a lower level of IT support during certain days each week. With this in mind, they also needed absolute confidence in the design, performance and reliability of the product to ensure a consistent and professional experience. Compatibility with the existing IT infrastructure was also essential.

In addition, the team was desperate to streamline and simplify the process of developing presentations and updating reports on the move, as this often led to large files being shared via email, clogging inboxes and slowing the collaborative process. The ability to perform complex tasks was also important, as a number of staff required a system that was robust enough to deal with additional graphics and video software.

The solution

Go ON UK worked with the Toshiba Small Business team to establish that the Toshiba Portégé Z930 Ultrabook™, running Windows 7, with the option to upgrade to Windows 8 at a later date, was best suited to the organisation's requirements. This was thanks to its slim (at its thinnest point, the Z930 measures just 8.3mm), lightweight (1.12kg) design. Even when paired with the device's power pack and cable, it was the perfect choice for a team looking for a portable experience.

The built in 3G slot also enabled a consistent internet connection regardless of their location, allowing staff to remain productive while on long train journeys and away from the comfort of WiFi access. This gave the team access to Outlook for ongoing communication, but also Microsoft's OneDrive service as a means of storing files in the cloud, giving staff secure access to important documents wherever they are and freeing their overall inbox space. It also created a more simple collaborative process for preparing client-facing documents away from the office.

The Portégé Z930's Intel® Core™ i5 CPU (running at 1.90 GHz, with 2.90GHz boost where required) and 6GB of RAM also allowed staff to benefit from a powerful and reliable multitasking experience, whether they were working across a number of programmes at the same time, or preparing new marketing graphics and educational videos, which were ideal to view on its 13.3-inch screen. The device also benefits from a 128GB Solid State Drive (SSD), as opposed to traditional 'spinning disc' functionality, for swift access to documents in a compact and energy efficient way - an SSD has no moving parts, which means battery life isn't unnecessarily impacted upon when working on the move. It also lowers the risk of data loss if the device is dropped, for example.

With staff often on the road for days at a time, the Ultrabook's™ 8 hour battery life, matte finish screen to reduce glare and backlit LED keyboard also allowed them to work from day to night with ease.

The results so far

Go ON UK has transformed into an efficient force in the charity sector, whether the staff are at the organisation's head office in London, travelling, or at another organisation's headquarters. The ability to go from taking the Ultrabook™ out of its case to opening a document in less than 20 seconds has moved both the company's productivity as well as the professional experience it provides clients to the next level. Staff are also better connected than ever before, thanks to the Z930's 3G functionality.

"Our transition to the Toshiba Portégé Z930 Ultrabook™ was incredibly easy, especially when integrating the hardware into our network," says Mr Donnell. "Toshiba's longstanding reputation for reliability also gives me peace of mind, particularly due to my part time status, and the sleek, light and powerful experience reported by the team has taken the services we offer to a new level of efficiency and professionalism."

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Having this mobile technology available has proved invaluable. One example is its recent partnership with Argos, which sees them offer digital workshops to 10,000 adults in 120 stores across the country. The initiative, which began in late-October 2014, has involved planning, coordination and execution for the small team on a major scale, and in a relatively short timeframe - all the workshops are set to be complete by January 2015. Ensuring employees are able to work at maximum efficiency while on the move has been crucial to its success, particularly while they both juggle logistics with various partners and create content for the sessions, not to mention market the service itself.

Mr Donnell has also reported that staff continue to comment on the benefits of the new Ultrabooks™, and how they enable more dynamic and flexible ways of working. The device has particularly benefitted the team's social media manager, who travels from Essex to London each day. For example, signal failures will no longer affect how connected she is to the office.

"The team get so much more from the increasing hours they spend traveling and this has allowed us to function at a broader capacity, but with the same amount of people, which is obviously a dream come true for an organisation like ours," he reflects.

The future

Following Go ON UK's positive installation experience, the team is keen to continue to use the Z930s for their day-to-day operations.

"The Ultrabook's™ power and reliability was always a selling point, but the ability to upgrade seamlessly to Windows 8, further future proofing Go ON UK's IT infrastructure, made the Z930 the obvious choice for us," concludes Mr Donnell.

