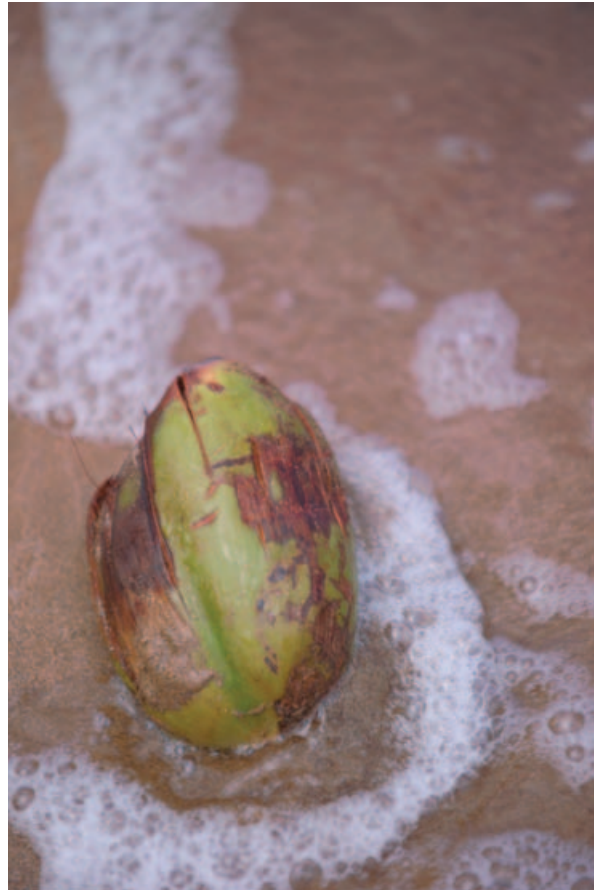


HP Deskjet printers see military action thanks to Blazepoint



"Association with HP means that we have the trustworthiness of the original HP product to combine with our experience in ruggedisation, which in turn makes our bid submissions credible."

Robert Cook, director of defence sales,
Blazepoint





Technology has a vital role to play in the work of today's armed forces but most traditional IT equipment is totally unable to withstand the rigours of military operations or battlefield conditions.

Temperatures ranging from -18 to +60 degrees centigrade, 95 per cent humidity, driving rain, sand and dust, corrosive atmospheres and being continually dropped from the height of a standard desk would kill the average office printer, but HP Deskjet printers are surviving just such hostile tests.

HP Deskjet 6122 colour inkjet printers are the latest IT recruits to be enlisted into the forces thanks to the work of Oxford-based Blazepoint, whose Defence Engineering

Division is one of the UK's foremost manufacturers of 'ruggedised' printers and peripherals for the defence industry.

Extreme action

Blazepoint has been designing HP products into its rugged hardware for military customers since 1996. The HP Deskjet printer mechanisms are mounted in custom-made protective enclosures, and can then see action on Navy vessels, for aircraft ground support, under canvass and even in the open air.

HP Deskjets were used in the latest Gulf War and have been part of many military projects. The latest is Project Bowman, which is providing a £2.4 billion upgrade to

UK forces communications networks and includes rugged computing equipment which will be fitted into 20,000 military vehicles, training facilities, Royal Navy vessels and helicopters.

Confidence builder

Blazepoint has provided 2,000 HP Deskjet A4 printers, 158 HP 1700i A3 printers and 2,000 HP Jetdirect print servers for the project.

"For our purposes we require inherently rugged devices that at the outset of a project give confidence that the end product will meet the military specifications," said Blazepoint's director of defence sales, Robert Cook. "We have built up such confidence with HP printers over the past eight years. In 1996, our first product incorporated the HP Deskjet 690 - it's still in production and used in several UK and overseas projects."

New arenas

In addition to the UK military, Blazepoint's other customers include the Greek Artillery, New Zealand Airforce, the Czech Army and the Italian MoD. Also, it is now moving into the wider field of rugged mobile computing including HP processors and possibly PDAs, working with law enforcement agencies and as an expert for the Tempest security standards called up by NATO.

"Blazepoint is very happy with HP equipment especially as we have never experienced interoperability problems with computers and software," added Cook.

"Association with HP means that we have the trustworthiness of the original HP product to combine with our experience in ruggedisation, which in turn makes our bid submissions credible."

Customer at a glance:

Industry sector: Rugged hardware

Name: Blazepoint

Headquarters: Oxford, UK

Founded: 1982

Telephone: +44 (0) 1865 892030

Number of employees: 45

Annual revenues: £6 million

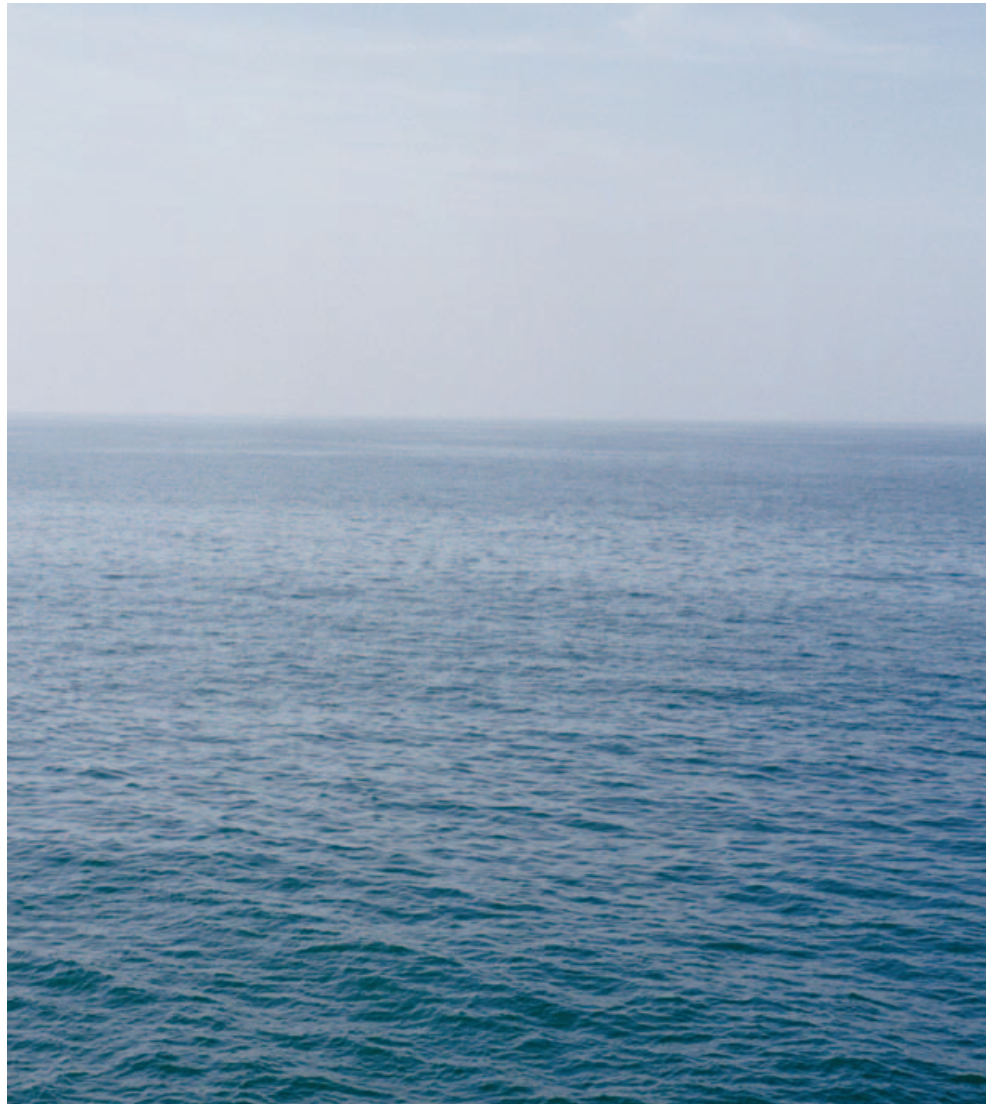
URL: www.blazepoint.co.uk

Why HP?

- If the end result is to meet military specifications, Blazepoint needs to start with inherently rugged devices and HP printers fulfil that requirement.
- Blazepoint has built up confidence in HP equipment based on eight year's experience.
- The trustworthiness of HP products combined with Blazepoint's expertise increases the company's bid success rate.

Hardware

- 2,000 x HP Deskjet 6122 A4 colour inkjet printers
- 158 x HP 1700i A3 printers
- 2,000 x JetDirect 300X and 200M print servers



Challenge

- Blazepoint provides rugged printers and peripherals for use by the military.
- They must be able to withstand hostile conditions including extremes of temperature, humidity, dust, rain and corrosive atmospheres.
- They must also withstand being dropped from a height of 750mm.

Solution

- Blazepoint predominantly buys HP Deskjet A4 printers, strips off the plastic casing then mounts the mechanism in specially engineered enclosures.
- These enclosures are rack mountable to be used in military vehicles, Royal Navy vessels or helicopters.
- Board level components such as power supplies are also secured.

Results

- Blazepoint has been one of the leading suppliers of ruggedised printers to the military since 1966.
- They are used by many military forces and in many countries. The latest success has been the Bowman Communication System, which provides a £2.4 billion upgrade of UK forces communication and IT.
- Blazepoint is now looking at diversifying into rugged PCs and PDAs for Government and law enforcement agencies.

For more information on how working with HP can benefit you, please contact your local HP sales representative or reseller, or visit www.hp.com.

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Publication Number: 5982-6807EE Written: June 2004

