

CASE STUDY

DIAMOND PARKING USES PARKER TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT CUSTOMERS



"Family Owned & Operated"



Parker Technology helps Diamond Parking Services deliver on its promise to provide the best service possible, and to help make customers feel like they are getting more than just a parking space.

Diamond Parking is one of the oldest parking companies in the United States. Spanning four generations, and still family owned, Diamond Parking was founded in Seattle in 1922 by Josef Diamond. Early in their history, as founder Josef Diamond found himself-acquiring land through trade for his legal services, Diamond lit upon the concept of parking cars on their otherwise yet to be developed property.

Currently they operate in eight U.S. states and two provinces in Canada, manage approximately 2,000 parking sites and manage on-street and municipal parking in multiple markets in the Seattle area as well as several other municipal contracts within the state of Washington and the state of Oregon.

Diamond mostly focuses on property acquisition and partnership-based development of their commercial properties. Along with this, they also provide parking management and operator services to a variety of premier property management companies. From all this experience, a fundamental principal for Diamond Parking has risen to the forefront: customer service.

“If people have a bad experience, they are either going to tell lots of people or never come back. Or both. We don’t want that. We want them to have a great experience, even if they have a challenge,” said Greg Harrison, Regional Manager for Diamond Parking.



AUTOMATED TECH'S IMPACT ON THE PARKING EXPERIENCE

Diamond identified the need for full-time customer service early on. Providing parking attendants in their lots and managing parking through the personal experience began as much by necessity as design. Early on, it was simply the only way to oversee a property and ensure that revenue was collected. As their parking management business began to expand, they recognized that providing on-site assistance to parkers was integral to their management philosophy. But as technology advanced and more and more sites adopted the automation paradigm, business model considerations meant fewer on-site personnel, a great reliance on technology, and the need to provide service in a more dispersed and less constant basis.

Essentially, this was grounded in the reality that the automation technology provided a benefit to both the parking user and the parking provider. It made payments and access easier to facilitate, and more efficient, and it reduced the need for customer service intervention because the technology does work so well. But consequently, it also meant that when users encountered a challenge, whether with navigating the technology, completing the payment process, or even periodic failures with the technology, they would need assistance from an actual person. With the parallel reduction in on-site personnel, this presented a challenge. How do you provide the support needed, and still take full advantage of your technology investment?



USING TECH TO SUPPORT USERS

Diamond identified the need for customer support and set about ways to provide it. They attempted multiple iterations, from creating and staffing their own 24/7 customer service center, to outsourcing with another intercom answering service.

“We attempted to manage this ourselves but did not do a very good job with it. It just presented a lot of logistical challenges that are not in our core competencies,” Harrison said. Still needing a solution to address their customer service goals, Diamond began to look for a solution to address our customer service needs over a multitude of sites, throughout the western United States.

They tried other answering services, but found that their expertise was not in parking, and while they might respond to the call, they often did not strive to solve the customer’s problem simply beyond opening the gate and allowing exit. While this solved the issue for the parking users, it was not fully beneficial to the property owner. Diamond continued to look for a better solution and that is when they found Parker Technology through an industry connection.

“We haven’t come across an agent that we can complain about. In fact, I was once visiting a site when I witnessed a parking user access the customer service and heard the Parker agent answer the phone: ‘Diamond Parking, how may we assist you?’ It was not until then that I realized this was a standard feature, and a great one at that, as the fact that it was handled, and the way it was handled fits right into our offering”



CUSTOMER SERVICE, REPORTING & REVENUE CAPTURE

Diamond Parking's primary focus is providing customer service, and second to that, they prioritize the reporting functions that Parker Technology provides to them. While revenue is certainly a concern, it is secondary to maintaining a high degree of positive customer experience.

"Our previous services were not experts in parking, and often they would simply open or "vend" the gate without even inquiring as to why the individual was having difficulty exiting the facility. Naturally, this led to people learning rather quickly how they might get free parking. Simply push the call button and someone on the other end will open the gate, no questions asked. Because of Parker's agents' expertise, they do not do that. And while revenue has not been our primary, or even secondary, focus, I'm sure that it has been positively impacted by the fact that Parker Technology's representatives inquire as to why an individual is unable to exit the facility, and is likely getting more payment for exit, when before it was just a free pass," Harrison said.

While revenue may not be a driving factor, Parker Technology's customer service does contribute to improved revenue scenarios, if simply by providing the tech navigation assistance needed to ensure that the parking equipment is able to serve its function.



AS AN EXAMPLE...

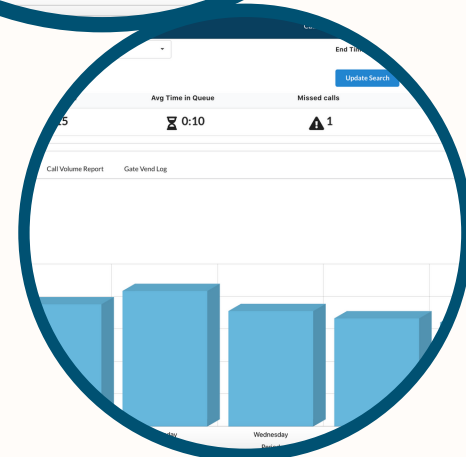
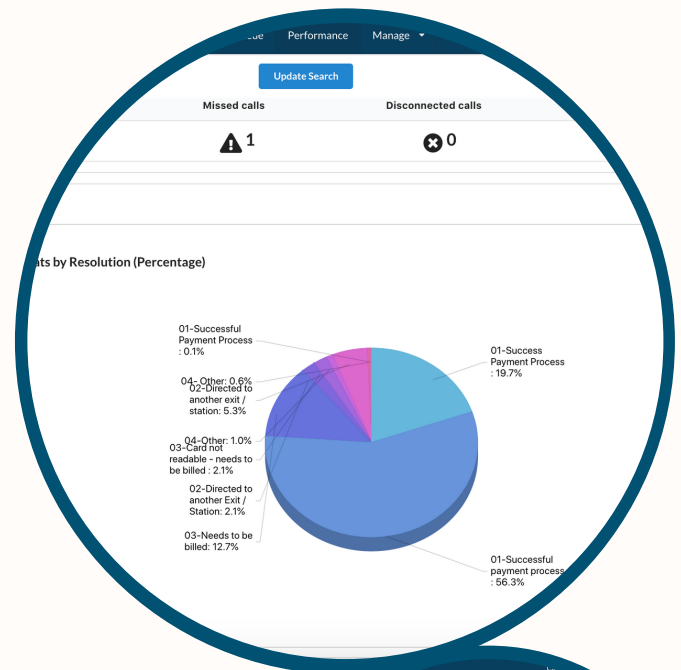
The Station at Othello Park Apartments Garage came online just before April of 2021. Over the next nine months, the garage experienced 459 transient parker issues caused by a variety of reasons, such as:

- Enter/Exit Process
- Credit Card Payment
- Cash Payment
- Invalid Ticket
- Lost Ticket
- Insufficient Funds

Of those 459 calls, 180 were resolved to a successful payment method by way of a variety of resolutions such as:

- Directed to Another Entry / Exit
- Paid Lost Ticket Fee
- Successful Payment Process
- Needs to be Billed
- Facility Management Contacted
- Directed Customer to Pay-On-Foot

That works out to nearly 40% of transient-related issues being resolved with successful payment collection. The other 60% were vended with management approval or by following standard, client-directed business procedure. The garage's lowest ticket price is \$7, indicating a minimum additional revenue of \$1,260 (just for that one garage) for the initial 9 months working with Parker Technology.



ACCOMMODATING EMERGING TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

At Parker we recognize that there is a multitude of hardware options for clients to choose from, and we understand that it is our job to be able to integrate with them. In our relationship with Diamond, being able to has been a benefit for both parties.

“Parker Technology is flexible and so very easy to work with. We have a client that has recently switched to a new parking equipment paradigm, one that is non-traditional and relatively new. It’s a great technology, but it is completely different from what we have worked with in the past. We let our client know that for customer service they still needed to be able to work with Parker. And when I reached out to my contact at Parker, their first reaction was: ‘no problem, we already work with that company, and we will just need to adjust our scripts to fit the needs of that technology.’”

“To me, Parker is like the experience that you might have with any premier product, such as fine clothing or a luxury automobile. Once you have had that level of performance, you never want to go back,” Harrison said.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Looking forward, Diamond is committing to the Parker solution.

“We have begun to require all new parking equipment that we purchase, and install, be capable of integrating with Parker Technology. Diamond’s first equipment acquisitions were made with a requirement to incorporate a particular brand of intercom system. While at the outset of the Diamond Parking + Parker Technology partnership, Parker lacked integration with this vendor, Diamond was not dissuaded, and changed out hardware to accommodate Parker,” Harrison said.

“I feel that when you find great customer service provider, you hook up to that and don’t let go. While it was a bit of an issue at first, we made the changes that were needed to incorporate the Parker Technology system into our parking services. And now I work with our clients to install Parker wherever it makes sense,” said Harrison.

While that has been going on, Parker Technology, through its relationship with Diamond Parking, has made great strides in integration with this intercom provider and they now have that capability. Showing how the partnership works in both directions to help find more robust and effective solutions for parking management.

Instead of going back, Diamond Parking and Parker Technology have continued to move forward. Diamond has expanded services to more than a dozen sites in Hawaii and Washington within a year of the initial launch. To us at Parker, that increased commitment to our offering is the greatest compliment, and we are proud to have grown our relationship with Diamond, and look forward to continuing it far into the future.



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