Parking Technology

By Bill Smith, Smith Phillips

On the March:
How technology has transformed parking

The headline of an article recently published by The Outline declared: "Americans are pretty ugly when parking their cars. The subhead read: The worst part of driving will never get better. The worst part of driving will never get better. But parking really the worst part of driving? In fact, over the past decade parking has gotten immensely more convenient and pleasant, largely because of the introduction of innovative new technologies designed to make parking more driver-friendly and manageable.

"We are in the midst of a technology revolution that has seen the introduction of unprecedented technological advancement," said Dan Kupferman, director of Car Park Management Systems for Walker Consultants. "Technology has made parking more efficient, more precise, and easier to operate. It's also making parking more customer-friendly than ever before."

Access And Revenue Control
Parking access and revenue control systems (PARCS) have long been technology staples for parking facilities. PARCS equipment controls who enters and exits parking facilities, while at the same time managing how users pay. Since people often enter buildings and building complexes through their parking facilities, parking also serves as a de-facto lobby that's managed by their PARCS equipment.

PARCS is also the cornerstone of one of the most exciting new trends in parking: frictionless parking. Frictionless parking permits drivers to park without interacting with traditional payment systems, and it revolves around a suite of technologies built on top of a Parking Access Control System. In addition to PARCS a frictionless suite can include license plate recognition (LPR), barcode readers, and reservation software. When combined in a frictionless suite, these technologies can make parking seamless and interactive by removing the need to stop at gates or mobile devices.

Parking guidance systems (PGS) represent another technology that has dramatically improved the parking experience. By its very nature, PGS has always been about custom service. By guiding drivers directly to open spaces, PGS eliminates the anxiety that often comes with parking and significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to find a space.

"Parking guidance systems take all the uncertainty out of finding a parking space," said Dale Fowler, director of INDECT USA, a leading provider of parking guidance systems. "By guiding drivers directly to open spaces, and then directing them back to their cars when they are ready to leave, the technology eliminates the parking frustrations that used to be so common."

But parking guidance technology has advanced by leaps and bounds in the past few years, and today it makes parking even more convenient. For instance, some parking guidance sensors have license plate recognition technology built into each sensor can identify individual vehicles. This feature can be used in frictionless parking systems to provide feedback and other parking services.
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you crank up that AC. Protecting your business from the volatile energy markets requires good planning. A combination of strategic supply-side purchasing and demand-side energy efficiency measures is a great start to taking control over one of your largest expenses.

Chuck Hurchalla is president of Evolution Energy Partners, a premier full-service energy consulting firm with extensive knowledge of the deregulated energy markets. Evolution Energy Partners’ executive team has over 80 years experience in energy procurement and energy engineering – and has used this expertise to help clients maximize the opportunities while minimizing the risks that these markets pose. How a business uses energy is an important factor in managing energy needs, therefore services are designed to partner with the supply and demand sides to achieve clients’ energy goals.

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parking owners benefit as well. For instance, by making parking sessions more flexible, user-friendly, and useful." said Dan Kupferman of Walker Consultants. "Mobile technology was always very convenient for drivers, but today it is much more flexible, user-friendly, and useful."

Exciting Times Technology has transformed the parking experience, and far from being “the worst part of driving,” today’s typical parking experience is much more convenient and pleasant than ever before. And with the constant pace of innovation we can expect even more exciting advancements in the coming years.

Bill Smith is public relations consultant specializing in parking, and a contributing editor to Parking Professional magazine.

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