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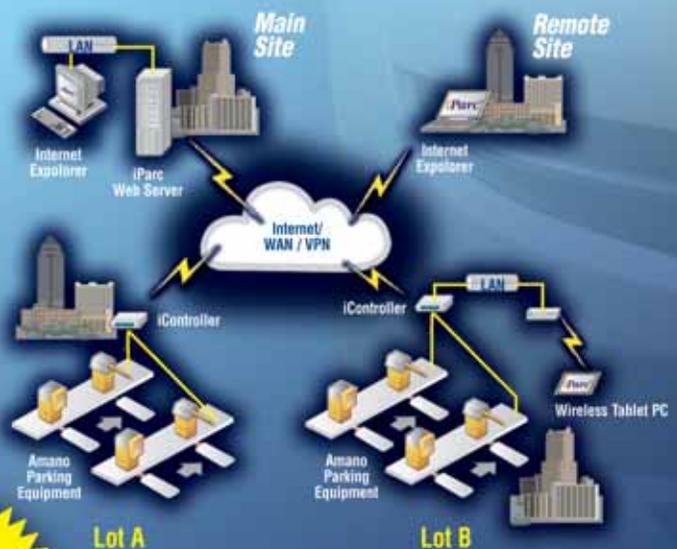
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Valet Parking Group Set

BY JOHN VAN HORN

“We are real companies with real employees, and we need to tell our story.” That’s Chip Patterson of Ameri Park in Atlanta describing one reason he and eight other valet parking companies from across the country founded the National Valet Parking Association two years ago.



“We didn’t want to publicize it too much in the beginning,” Patterson said. “We needed to be sure we knew where we were going with it.”

“The problem with valet parking companies is that there are two types.”

“One type are legitimate companies that have employees, pay FICA and SDI, have insurance, HR departments, customer service, training programs and claims management. The other type is a guy who puts some nails in a board and says he’s a valet parking company. It’s very difficult for legitimate companies to compete.”

“Our goal is to provide a way that valet companies can create an aware-

ness with our clients that can level the playing field,” Patterson said. “We need to show our customers that there is a difference.”

Also, according to Patterson, “we need to separate the valet profession from the rest of the parking industry. We aren’t ‘big-box’ parking companies that do valet

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s Standards for Industry

on the side. We specialize and therefore can provide, we think, the best possible service to our clients.”

He said valet companies have a different focus from most parking operators. “We are about 100% service to the person parking the car. Everything else is secondary. Unlike park-and-locks, when we take a car, we accept responsibility for that car. We must take good care of it.”

Founding member Ben Akbary of Quality Parking Service in Los Angeles said that a major goal of the organization needs to be a dramatic increase in its membership. New members bring new ideas, he said. “We can reach our goals of a more professional industry only by reaching out and including as many companies as possible.”

Amano’s Scott Hill, an association vendor member, noted that major changes are taking place in the valet business. Airports, hospitals and on-street valets are becoming more and more prevalent. Plus, mixed-use facilities, such as high-rises and shopping centers, are incorporating valet into the overall parking operations.

“We are a hands-on business, even though the companies may be fairly large,” said Mike Pendergraft, head of American Valet Company in Phoenix and

President of the association. “This is truly a relationship business. However, the relationship one builds with the customer isn’t the only thing,” he said. “You have to perform. Most heads of the companies I know spend most of their time in the field, working with their employees and ensuring that customers’ needs are met.”

“Remember, we are the front door of the companies we serve,” Pendergraft said. “In many cases, our staff members

expect something more than just a warm body at the front door.

“Standards are the key,” Patterson added. “If we can set standards – and by the way, we are constantly working to make them more exhaustive and complete – adhere to them, and convince our customers that they are important, we have accomplished our mission.

“My goal is that when a client goes out to bid for valet services, he has a list of our standards in his hand and ensures that all bidders meet the requirements of that list. That way,” Patterson said, “the playing field is level, and then we can compete.”

In addition to Patterson, Akbary and Pendergraft, other founding members of the association are Domingo

Composto, Valet Parking Service, Chicago; Michael Harth, Sunset Parking Service, Solana Beach, CA; Jean Pierre Petit, Valet Parking Experts, Miami; Aaron Shocket, Parking Solutions, Columbus, OH; Jerry South, Towne Park, Annapolis, MD; and Andrew Tuchler, Ultimate Parking, Boston.

For complete information about the NVPA, log on to its Web site (www.nvpaonline.com).

PT

‘The other type is a guy who puts some nails in a board and says he’s a valet parking company.’

are the doormen as well as the valets. We must do the job right; there is no second chance.”

“However, fly-by-night operators can come in, make a nice sales pitch, and take the account away. Oh, we will probably get it back after they fail, but in the meantime, the customer has been hurt and we have lost an account.

“Our goal at the NVPA,” Pendergraft said, “is to begin to market valet parking in such a way that our customers begin to



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Parking Revenues Said to be \$18 Billion, Maybe ...

The years 2007 and 2008 could be healthy ones for what may become an \$18-billion parking industry, according to Dale Denda of the Parking Market Research Co. Speaking at the Parking Industry Exhibition, the researcher also projected more than 400 garages would be built during each of the next two years.

Denda was quick to point out, however, that the \$18 billion figure is on the high end of his estimates, and his charts showed a figure closer to \$13.7 billion, with an error factor of up to 30%. This is due, he says, to the problems the Commerce Department has in collecting data about parking.

He gave a couple of examples.

In one case, airports report income from parking and it's specific and well-documented; however, the operators that run the airports also report some of that as income. This type of "double" reporting may go on in other sectors of the market. In and of itself, this doesn't affect the total size, Denda said, but it reflects the problems in dealing with government numbers.

In another and more crucial case, all of the income of certain public entities aren't included in the government numbers. This may not seem like a lot until you realize that it includes the non-airport parking income of NY/NJ Port Authority (it owns a large number of non airport parking facilities), and other types of quasi government entities such as commuter train parking (SEPTA, WAMATA, etc.) That can skew the totals substantially.

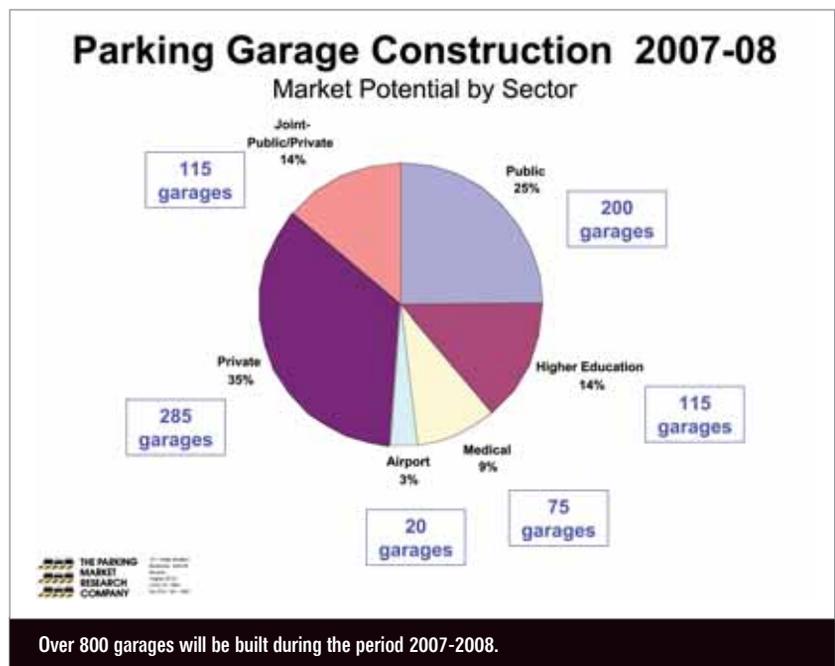
Denda also pointed out that in the case of many small, privately owned operators; the acquisition of gross income data was difficult. Much of the data was from voluntary surveys, and larger companies tend to have the resources to respond to such requests. This, too, adds to the potential for error on the plus side.

He was optimistic, however, about the construction of freestanding parking garages for 2007 and 2008. "Statistically there will be, on average, 1.5 garage starts each working day for the two-year period," Denda said, "the numbers would suggest that the amount of work for revenue control, lighting, consulting, design and construction companies will be substantial."

As the chart nearby shows, the public (cities, states) and private (developers) sectors have more than half of the con-



Gross parking revenues as reported by US sources. Some income may have been overlooked, and therefore up to a 30% error factor needs to be considered.



Over 800 garages will be built during the period 2007-2008.

struction projects. Higher ed, joint public/private projects and airports round out the projections.

Parking revenue has been relatively stagnant in the past three years, Denda said, and he projects little increase over the next

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Parking Revenues Said to be \$18 Billion, Maybe ...

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three. He posits a reason for that flat line.

"In the past 15 years, the U.S. construction market has built about 4.4 million structured spaces," Denda said. "Of those, between 1.7 million and 2.5 million spaces are not controlled on an hourly or daily basis for fee (or any other parking transaction). Moreover, about 65% of this new construction (2.9 million spaces) was built since 1999.

"This translates to the fact that over half the new spaces built have been designated 'free' parking (i.e., non-revenue generating). Of course, some would argue that the parking isn't 'free,' but that the cost is bundled with rents or increases in other prices," Denda said. "In fact, much of

this parking is provided as an amenity by the development owner as an inducement for rental and use. This fact can have great implications as to future overall parking revenue generation.

"So the question is: Is a major factor in the flat line of parking revenue over the period 2002-2008 a reflection to the increase in supply of non-revenue generating parking? One might comment that it was due to a post-2002 downturn, but the government data don't support that. The GDP has increased at 3.5% per year during the past three years. I think the answer, therefore, has to lie elsewhere, most likely in the increase of non-revenue-generating supply."

Denda went on to explain the issues in determining the gross

revenue for the parking industry. Some included the complexity (difficulty of estimation) of the details, the sizes of constituent elements which are isolated, and a recognition of what is included (cash or equivalent transactions) and excluded (in lieu payment). Revenue has increased nearly 50% in the past decade. It reached its peak in 2000-2001, and then basically flat lined. The economy, however, after 2000-2001 downturn has continued to grow at near record rates.

His company's research included the examination of available government data, the extrapolation from that data, and the determination of the value of the result.

Denda pointed out that the Commerce Department (Bureau of Census) conducts both five-year and annual surveys of various sectors of the business economy, including parking. Based on those data – adjusted for omissions and other methodological problems – PMRC estimated the total operating revenue (off-street & on-street) for the domestic parking industry.

This estimate includes all revenue generated from off-street facilities (lots and garages) by cash or equivalent transactions through facility operator or paid to owner; fees and all other income reported by private operator (off-street and on-street); and all on-street revenue (including fines) collected by public jurisdictions. But it excludes all expense accounts (operating expense) and other outlays (i.e., capital construction) and no-cash (in-lieu) internal transactions that are defined by (non-parking) real estate operation.

Dale Denda is the research director of the Parking Market Research Co. He can be reached at ddenda@parkingresearch.com.

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(There will be) 1.5 garage starts each working day for the two-year period



When designing the facade for a parking garage at Good Samaritan Hospital in Dayton, OH, the specifications called for a woven wire cloth material that would provide sun protection, security and aesthetics. The product chosen was W.S. Tyler's Dokawell-Mono Architectural Woven Wire Cloth. Its design gives a transparent appearance to the facade. Also, when exposed to light, it creates single illuminated reflection points, which results in a totally different look.

15,000 parking pros see PT Classifieds each month in Print – another 12,500 see them online.

Travelers Warned of Online Parking Scams

Holidaymakers are falling foul of off-airport parking scams, trading standards chiefs warned.

The Trading Standards Institute (TSI) said there had been "a host of complaints" from travelers who used alternative services to avoid the cost of parking at airports.

In one case, a couple from Barry, South Wales, lost their car, with all efforts failing to trace the Web site they had used. The couple had paid \$275 to an online service, which offered to collect their car from Stansted Airport, park it in a nearby secure compound and have it waiting for them on their return.

The TSI said it had received other reports of cars being returned with high mileages, damaged or with other people's possessions inside. Some owners have found themselves liable for big parking penalties or speeding tickets, through no fault of their own.

Sarah Smith, a TSI officer, said: "There are several perfectly legitimate services operating online, which offer alternative parking facilities near to an airport. However, new websites are springing up all the time, which claim to offer similar services but are in fact run by con men and crooks.

"It can be tempting to try to save a few pounds, but the consequences of using a scam operator can be very costly, particularly as insurance companies might not pay up for any losses incurred in this type of situation."

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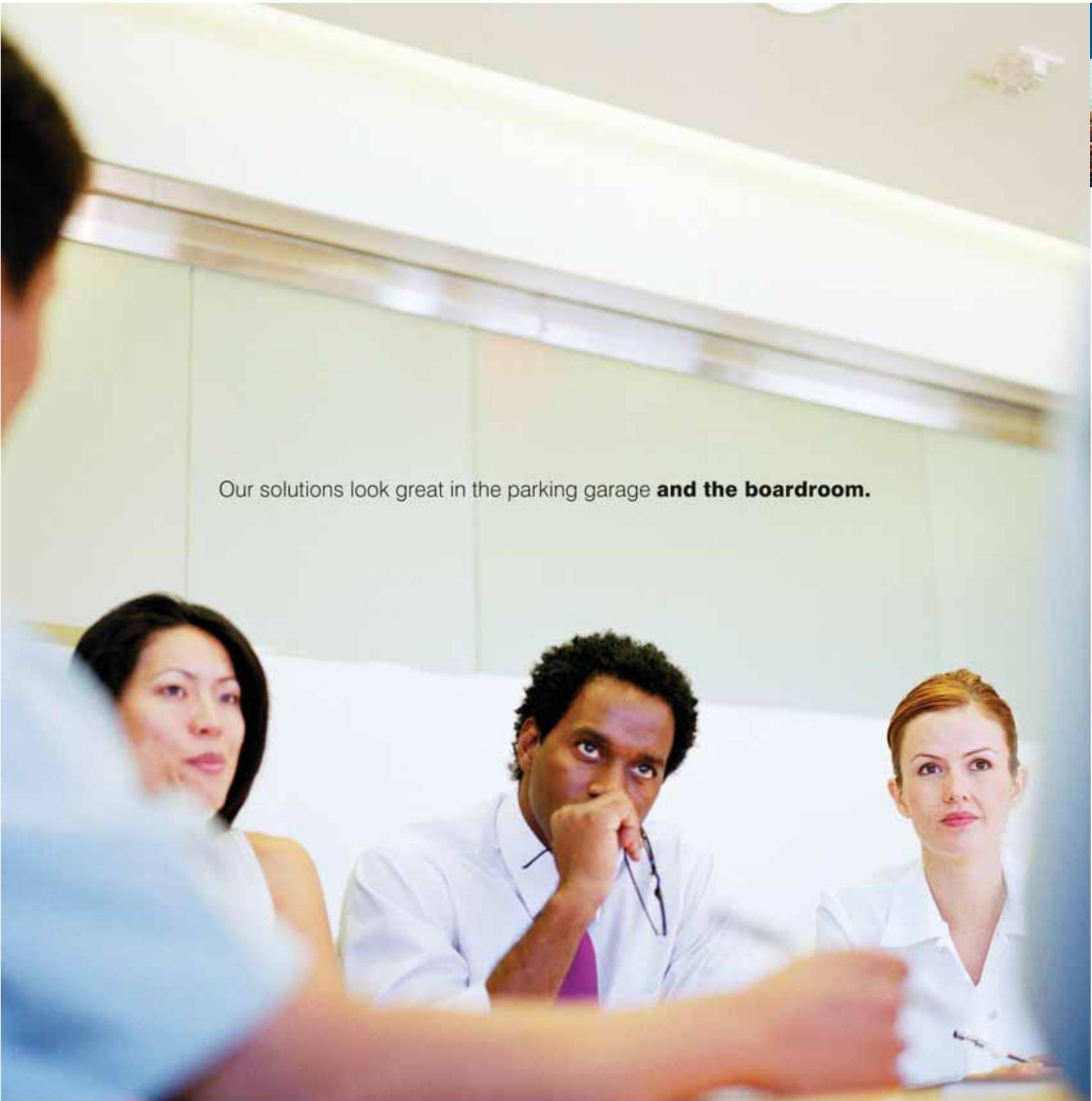
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CCTV Means Safer Parking and Higher Profits in UK

BY CAROLINE AKEROYD

When Town Centre Securities decided to build a new multi-story garage in Manchester, England, the parent company of Town Centre Car Parks resolved to follow a program initiated to improve the security of vehicles within the parking environment. As a result, not only the garage but the entire surrounding area has benefited.

The new Manchester parking facility – the Tariff Street garage in the Piccadilly Basin – has 240 spaces and is open 24/7. Situated in the center city, it forms the hub of the investment and development company's parking facilities. Three other surface sites provide parking for an additional 600 vehicles.

All CCTV for the sites is linked to maximize the range and effectiveness of coverage.

Russell Hancock, Operations Manager of Town Centre Car Parks, has been in the parking business for more than 25 years. He has seen the progression from providing the basic requirement – a parking space – to the high-tech systems demanded of today's market.

"Security started becoming an issue about 12 years ago," Hancock says. "CCTV was being used in shops, and we needed to meet customer expectations and ensure the safety of customers, staff and property alike by following suit."

Of course, the added benefits of such a system are that it reduces premiums and satisfies insurers that an effective system to minimize crime is in place. "It used to be that installing CCTV in a garage was seen as adding value," Hancock says, "but now it's a minimum requirement if you want to be taken seriously."

After discussions with the Greater Manchester Police, a CCTV system was designed to provide facial recognition of any person entering or exiting the parking facility. In addition, it would record all vehicle movements in and out of the garage. Relationships with the police have continued to develop since this time and the company is now involved with the Piccadilly Partnership, the Crime Reduction Partnership and the Business Watch Scheme, helping to reduce crime in the whole area. "I can't recommend enough the benefits of being

involved with schemes like these," Hancock says. "We share information, resources and systems to really maximize our effectiveness in stamping out crime."

Regular meetings are held between the police and Town Centre Car Parks, with the relationship benefiting both parties. The parking facility is ensured prompt police action in case of an incident, and the police have gained another partner in the fight against crime. "The police can come and use the cameras and review the footage at any time," Hancock says. "This benefits the Piccadilly Basin community as a whole."

Continued on Page 24



A Safer Parking Program:

The Safer Parking Program was introduced in 2004. The program was brought about to encourage those responsible for parking facilities to improve security standards as a means of reducing criminal activity, the fear of crime, and the perception of crime in all garages, lots and vehicle retention areas. The initiative is aimed primarily at the management of criminal behavior within the parking environment, and hence requires owners/operators to adopt an active management strategy to ensure that there is minimal occurrence of crime.



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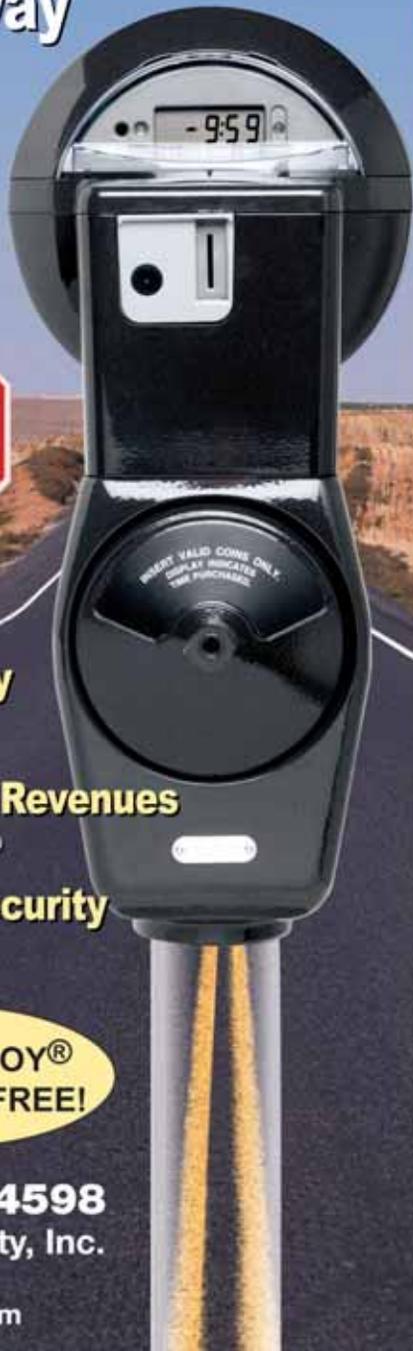
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CCTV Means Safer Parking and Higher Profits in UK

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Vista vandal-resistant domes, supplied by distributor Norbain SD Ltd., have been interfaced into the garage management system to automatically display any of the on-site help points activated by a member of the public. The Monitoring Centre in Leeds uses a touch screen-controlled virtual matrix including graphical maps, allowing selection and control of several sites via a high-speed broadband connection. A Vista monitor also has been installed at the garage office, where it is used for general monitoring and as an alarm monitor, which automatically displays the relevant camera image after an alarm activation.

Having two 24-hour monitoring systems in place – one on-site and the other in Leeds – is designed to ensure that no incident is overlooked. “The dual system works brilliantly,” Hancock says, “because if the on-site personnel need to leave the reception area, they and the other garages can still be monitored from the control centre. This means that their



Good security makes the facility more attractive to parkers.

safety and that of customers' property in the garage are always being looked after. Additionally, because different cameras are being observed by both sites, no area in any of the garages is overlooked.

“There's no doubt the system is working,” Hancock says. “Clearly, advertising the use of continually monitored CCTV is a big deterrent to potential trouble-makers and it stops the parking sites from being easy targets. There have been no incidents in the Tariff Street garage since the installation, and there's been only one incident in one of the surface lots. Here the police were able to make an arrest with the aid of the CCTV footage.”

Hancock also says that installing the CCTV system has increased business for the facility. He predicts that the system – which cost about \$120,000 in all – will pay for itself within 12 months. He asks: “If two operators have garages in the same vicinity, one with CCTV and one without, which would you choose?”

Caroline Akeroyd, the public relations executive with Norbain, can be reached at Caroline.Akeroyd@norbain.co.uk.

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Car Dead In Lot; Free Aid On the Way

Starting this fall, thousands of Metra riders will be able to get some free, and fast, help. Impark is taking over management of Metra's parking lots and will not only assist with problems such as flat tires and empty gas tanks, it will pay stranded motorists \$50 if it takes more than 45 minutes to respond to a help call.

Though customer service aides at O'Hare and Midway Airports offer free assistance for such difficulties as a flat tire or lost car, they don't have to respond within a certain time, said Wendy Abrams, a Chicago Department of Aviation spokeswoman.

Until now, Metra didn't offer the service, either. But that will change this fall when Impark takes over the management of the more than 8,100 parking spaces under a contract with Metra.

Although Metra didn't request the parking assistance program, that feature, along with the \$50 courtesy check, was one reason the commuter railroad's evaluation committee gave Impark top scores in a customer service category that analyzes conveniences or innovations that favor Metra riders.

Impark also will institute a new way for people to pay for parking. Commuters will be able to register on Impark's Web site (www.imparkwireless.com). That way, if they are running late and don't want to risk a parking ticket or miss a train, they can call on their cellphones to pay.

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\$1 Million Spent on V

When The Grove, a popular Los Angeles shopping, dining and entertainment destination, opened in 2002 its developer took the parking experience as seriously as the shopping experience and installed the most sophisticated smart parking technologies available. Recently The Grove invested approximately \$1 million

Let's face it, our valet waiting area looks like the lobby of a Ritz Carlton.

in enhancing its valet parking creating a richly appointed and expanded area. Stepping out onto the red carpet guests experience an environment and service on par with the most exquisite luxury hotels.

“We want our guests first and last impressions to be the finest, and that occurs in the parking facility,” noted Paul Kurzawa, Vice President of Operations, a development in Los Angeles of Caruso Affiliated..

“Their shopping experience needs to be unique from the moment they drive in. Let's face it, our valet waiting area looks like the lobby of a Ritz Carlton.”

Located in a densely populated area of Los Angeles adjacent to the historic Farmers Market, The Grove is one of a new genre of shopping environments that creates an open air street scene a significant departure from the large format, enclosed regional shopping malls. It has many retailers that are unique to the area such as is the first and only west coast location for American Girl Place along with many popular name brand retailers. “Our philosophy is to provide a great experience with attractive design and unparalleled service. Elements such as the dancing fountain and the trolley that runs throughout the property engage customers and we find they tend to stay longer than at traditional malls. Parking is an important part of this overall experience,” noted Kurzawa.

The valet lounge gives no direct impact to our bottom line but it's a large part of the picture we paint, he adds. It adds to the emotional experience of the visit.

Parking, adding to the emotional experience? “Of course,” says Kurzawa, “this is our front door, it sets the impression



Parkers enter the Grove past flowers and crystal.



Valet Customers can wait for their cars in a new, extremely comfortable waiting area.

Valet Lobby

whether it's the ease of self parking, or very upscale valet service. By the time a person enters The Grove, their expectations are already set. And then we ensure that when they leave, they have had an experience like nowhere else.

Rick Caruso has told his staff he wants high tech, but doesn't want the personal touch removed. The parking does just that. It was designed for pay on exit and there are two exit plazas with four and five booths each. The system also takes credit card on exit. Parking attendants are stationed at each exit to help, but if you know the system, you can let yourself out using your credit card.



The eight story garage has over 3,500 spaces and with turnover they park in excess of 50,000 cars a week. Employees park on the top levels of the garage during weekdays, however on weekends and during holidays, they park off site. "Our customers must come first."

They valet park over 500 cars each day. With an \$8 starting rate going up to \$25, its pricy for a shopping center, however

Kurzawa feels that if you give people the service, they are willing to pay the price.

"Charging for parking is important. In densely populated areas such as ours, we must protect our parking spaces for the convenience of our customers. We are next door to CBS studios and across the street from a number of large office buildings. If we didn't charge, our garage would be filled with non-customers. Most of the stores validate so most of our customers pay very little, if any at the exit gate."



Kurzawa went on to discuss a technical aspect of the garage. "When I was at another facility, I was not sure about level counters. Now I'm sold. Drivers have a tendency to want to park where they think it's most convenient and spend a lot of time cruising around trying to find a space. The counters, coupled with our double lane speed ramps, enable them to drive directly to a floor that has plenty of space, park, and enter the center long before some-



"Coco" welcomes customers, many by name.

one searching a lower floor finds a space and parks."

One of the main features of the garage is the speed ramp helix. Once you are on the ramp, you can drive directly to any floor, or leave through either of the two exits. If a car in front is slow and unsure, you can simply and safely pass them on the ramp and continue to exit. "The speed ramps are one of the garage's best features."

Complaints? Since we are an urban mall people think we are landlocked and always jammed for parking. It isn't true. We fill once in a while, but seldom. It's usually momentary, as when a number of movies let out at the same time. But it clears within a few minutes. In valet, we always park a car. We never turn someone away no matter how full we are. The level counters are a great help when we begin to fill. And they are extremely accurate. That is most important. If they don't work, it's worse than not having them at all."

Caruso's model appears to have paid off as the company's sales per square foot run approximately 40 percent higher than the industry average.

"We have some of the same stores as our competition, the same movies, the same restaurants, but we are more successful because of how we package our product and the customer experience. The parking experience is one of the most important elements of that package."



Automatic signs direct parkers to available space.

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Just a Taste of PIE 2006...

More than 700 people attended the 2006 Parking Industry Exhibition in Chicago and Los Angeles. According to Event Leaders Sandra Watson and Dawn Newman, it was an unabashed success.

New this year was the concept of the two events being tied together by audio and video on the Internet and “Speed Networking.”

“We know that PIE is a networking event,” Newman said, “so we attempted to formalize it a bit. We enabled a very large group of people to get to know one another individually in a very short period of time. It was amazing to see.”

Following are a few observations by PT staffers at PIE 2006:

What the Rev Control Vendors Think About Cashless

The senior staff of six companies that manufacture revenue control equipment sat in front of a group of interested attendees at PIE and spoke about the future of technology in parking. The panelists had a few “moments” when one used the word “imbecile” and another asked a questioner how many Jeff Foxworthy albums he had. But there was also considerable substance in the presentation.

The primary focus was on the use of an automated system to collect parking fees. Most agreed that an AVI-type system interlinked to a person’s credit cards was, without a doubt, the most convenient for the parker and the best for the parking operation. It also was agreed that facilities would never go completely cashless, at least not in America.



It was thought that an American’s individuality and desire to be able to use non-trackable cash would keep some parkers in that mode, no matter what.

Personally, I think it will be a business decision by the parking facility operators and owners. They will weigh the cost of collecting that cash from the maybe 2% who won’t park there or don’t have a credit card versus the amount of money they will receive from those folks and make a decision. My prediction: The decision will be for cashless – you can’t stay in a major hotel or rent a car without a credit card.

The 23-Minute Answer

As usual, Don Shoup gave a “Shoupista” oriented talk, and it was well received by the assembled masses in both Los Angeles and Chicago. His facts and ideas were clear and compelling. No doubt.

However, when the Q and A began, it was “interesting,” to say the least. To one question, Don responded in spades – 23 minutes worth.

If his remarks proved anything it was that Don certainly has a passion for his topic.

He honored us with a more “succinct” response to the questioner, who turned out to be, we think, Bill Bortfeld of the city of Santa Monica:

I enjoyed meeting you at the Parking Industry Exhibition and apologize for not being more succinct in answering your question.

As I recall, I thought you asked whether what worked in Old Pasadena [CA], which has lots of off-street parking, could work in Los Angeles, where there isn’t enough off-street parking.

Here is what I probably should have said:

First, when you don’t have enough off-street parking, it’s even more important to charge the right price for curb parking. If drivers depend on curb parking, you need to manage it so that a few spaces are always available for people who want to park. You need to manage the curb parking so drivers don’t constantly cruise for a vacant space and loudly complain about a shortage of parking.

Second, without knowing how much off-street parking spaces cost and how much drivers are willing to pay for them, no one knows how much off-street parking is ‘enough.’ Most of the guidelines on how much such parking is ‘needed’ are dangerous and misleading mumbo jumbo. The demand for parking depends on its price, and is not an absolute number.

Third, Los Angeles has more off-street parking spaces per square mile than any other city on Earth, so it’s hard to say that Los Angeles doesn’t have ‘enough’ off-street parking.

Fourth, Old Pasadena and Westwood Village [near UCLA] both have about the same number of off-street parking spaces. In 1992, [the city of] Pasadena installed parking meters and began

