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# The POF Installation of t

**“S**peed and customer service. That’s what it’s about here,” said Paul Kurzawa, VP of Management for Westfield Corp., as he spoke of why his flagship property, Westfield Century City in Los Angeles, upgraded its parking from pay-on-exit to a full-blown, completely automated pay-on-foot system. “The customers were ready, and we knew we needed to be on the cutting edge of technology,” Kurzawa said.

“Our [shopping] center is going through a complete renovation, and we needed to be certain that all our service functions led the market,” he said. “Los Angeles customers are attracted by the ‘latest and greatest.’ With the opening of our new theater complex this Christmas, the renovation of the mall, and our new parking system, we will definitely be leading the way.”

Although Kurzawa is in charge of 11 sizable properties in California for Australian Westfield Corp., he rattles off the numbers as if he is responsible for only this one: 3,000 spaces, 13 POFs, 9 entrances, 10 exits, 8,000 transactions a day, 11,000-12,000 on weekends, 17,000 on holidays.

“Our goal wasn’t primarily to get a handle on revenue, but it happened. Our lot counts were very inaccurate. They were off at least 10 percent. That meant ticket counts couldn’t be verified. We now have a true read on our traffic and our revenue. That’s a real benefit,” Kurzawa said.

“We believe that having a top-of-the-line world-class parking system makes a difference when customers visit our center. After all, the system is the first thing they see when they arrive, and the last thing they touch when they leave.

“Frankly, I can’t say enough about how smooth the changeover went. We were all here for the first day, which was on-schedule. There were virtually no complaints. The operator’s staff was in the lanes and around the POF machines to help.

“We wanted to fix the efficiency of the parking. We needed to speed up exits, and we did it,” Kurzawa said. “The customers now pay at the POFs, which are much quicker than paying in lane. Most are validated or exit during our two-hour grace period. However, we have restaurants and theaters, and even with extended validations,



Former cashier assists a customer at a POF in new installation in Century City, Los Angeles.

many still pay. Since we accept credit cards as well as cash, the process is very fast. And if they forget to pay at the POF station, they can still pay at exit with their credit card. Our customers love it.”

*PT* asked one parker what he thought of the new system. “I don’t know what took them so long; this is great.” The existing parking system was 13 years old and beginning to show considerable wear. According to Kurzawa, there was no question they made the right decision to upgrade.

# the Century!

By John Van Horn

Why controlled parking at a shopping center? "We are in the middle of one of the largest office complexes in Los Angeles. We have to control the parking or the poachers from adjacent buildings would fill our lots. They charge a very high fee to park next door (upwards of \$300 in some areas), and it's worth it for office workers to walk a block if they can park for free." (To park for free in this shopping center, they would have to move their cars four times a day.)

PT interviewed Kurzawa; John Lovell, President of Zeag North America, the manufacturer; Tim Morris of Integrated Access System, the installer; and Rico Alanzo, Regional Manager for the operator, Standard Parking. To a person, all agreed on one thing: "To make the changeover successful, you must fully commit to an automated system."

"It simply doesn't work if you keep the booths in place and give the customers a choice," said Morris. "They will choose the path with which they are familiar and go directly to their cars and pay at the booth. Even if the booth is not staffed, they see the booths and subconsciously think they can pay there. You must remove the booths."

Kurzawa agreed. "We visited a nearby center that has recently converted to POF. They left the booths and one cashier lane in place. The cashier lane was jammed and the rest of the exits empty. That defeated the entire reason for the new system: speed of exit. We made the decision then and there to remove the booths. It was exactly the right thing to do."

The system allows the operator to sell validation coupons to the merchants. The coupons look generally like an entry ticket and contain the value of the validation and the merchant account. They are inserted by the customer before the entry ticket and the appropriate fee is then calculated. The validations, like the tickets, are tracked online for audit and billing purposes.



Standard Parking Area Manager Rico Alanzo and some advertising installed at the complex.



"One of the major benefits" said Standard's Alanzo, "is that our employees now feel confident in the equipment and tend to give better service. They are proud of the operation and it shows. Instead of just standing in a booth all day and collecting money, they are able to get out and actually assist the customers with any problems they may have. They are ambassadors for the center." (Standard will be keeping all staff on-site during the holiday season, and has been able to relocate all those who are being supplanted by the new system.)

The new system also supports contact card holders. In this case, there are more than 600 monthly parkers, mostly employees at the center. "We have an agreement with a large garage across the street so that during holiday periods we can move the employees there," Kurzawa said. "We tend to fill only on the busiest shopping days."

Why Zeag-IAS? "We took a look at an installation IAS had done and it was very clean," Kurzawa said. "That was important to us. We had to have a great 'look.' In addition, frankly, I was impressed that the North American President of Zeag took the time to come and visit us, both before the sale and during installation.

"Good customer service is extremely important to us, if not the most important thing. If we are going to invest seven figures with a company, we want to know we are important to them. John made us feel that way."

PT Editor John Van Horn can be reached through [editor@parkingtoday.com](mailto:editor@parkingtoday.com). Contact Zeag through its Web site [www.zeag.com](http://www.zeag.com) and IAS at [www.ias-la.com](http://www.ias-la.com).

PT

# Parking is No. 1 in Patient Satisfaction

*Consultants – They can come up with solutions – like the following – that can save money, time, and disruption of your project. Editor.*

In 2003, the Michigan Parking Association referred to parking as “the No. 1 patient satisfaction concern.” As healthcare facilities move from basic medical treatment into more competitive environments, the message is clear: If customers are unable to find close and convenient parking, they have other choices in care.

Because parking is so important to a healthcare facility’s success, parking should be planned with the same care and detail that is used for patient care and flow inside the building.

Without proper site planning during the expansion of a healthcare facility or campus, parking can add costs in the long run.

Frequently, in the planning stages of an expansion project, there is a real dichotomy when it comes to parking. Planners must acknowledge the parking needs of an existing facility’s current (and future) patients, visitors, staff and physicians, while also recognizing there will be parking needs for contractors and workers during the construction phases. These competing interests can cause major disruptions to the ongoing operations of a facility, as well as add to the overall budget.

Amid a master planning project in Cincinnati, it was discovered that a complete transformation of the existing roadway and parking layout could potentially gain about 500 parking spaces. A couple of years later, when the decision was made to move forward with the next phase of expansion, an excess supply of parking spaces was in place for both what was going to be displaced, as well as for the anticipated construction workers.

Parking is still largely an afterthought at most healthcare facilities. At the same time, planning for parking at healthcare facilities continues



Well designed surface lots can be appropriate and convenient for staff and patients.

to increase in complexity. It may be helpful to start thinking of healthcare parking as similar to other commercial developments, such as retail and office.

Three decades ago, the standard for determining required parking at hospitals generally was based on the number of beds in a facility. Two-and-a-half to three spaces per bed was a safe calculation. Now, because of dramatic changes in how healthcare facilities operate (and based on several other factors, such as government and insurance reimbursement issues), a large majority of the people working at a hospital are basically office workers. In fact, healthcare facilities are becoming more and more like office buildings, especially with the increasing preference for outpatient procedures. Hospitals are no longer just places where doctors and nurses take care of patients in beds for long periods of time.

Therefore, like an office building, the greatest parking demand is the maximum number of employees on any one shift (usually between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.). That is becoming the new standard for determining required parking at hospitals.

Similarly, it is important to con-

sider the following: “Now that I have accommodated all the employees, how many parking spaces remain for patients and visitors?”

## Changing Demands

Outpatient healthcare facilities can schedule upward of 30,000 cases through a facility in a month. That’s a lot of people (most of whom may have limited mobility) coming to and going from a site. That’s also a lot of demand for close and convenient -- and sometimes accessible -- parking spaces.

These people frequently are at the site for only a few hours. They expect to be able to park as if they are at a shopping center – close to the door they need to go in, and with the ability to leave as quickly as possible when they are finished.

The whole paradigm of patient care (and thus patient parking) has changed.

Generally, the greatest parking demand at a healthcare facility is for staff and physicians. Staff parking can be designated farther away from convenient entrances and/or in parking decks, because they come to the same location nearly every day. Often, staff parking clogs up convenient loca-

# tisfaction

By Vince Ellwood

tions, and patients/visitors are forced to park farther away from building entrances. This is not favorable for customer satisfaction.

Zoning for parking at health-care facilities is changing too, and there is a growing concern over the potential negative environmental impacts of large impervious parking surfaces.

One recent example: A local planning commission was considering mandating a "maximum" number of parking spaces allowed. It wanted to minimize impervious areas and drainage runoff. Unfortunately, such a mandate could be very damaging to the business operation of a healthcare facility. If a maximum number of spaces was mandated, what happens when the facility's demand for parking spaces is greater? There seems to be a potential collision course on the horizon between environmental sensitivities concerning the nega-

## The whole paradigm of patient care (and thus patient parking) has changed

tive impacts of large impervious surfaces and the business demands for operating a healthcare facility properly.

It's odd that 25 to 30 years ago the trend was toward creating minimum parking requirements. Now the trend is moving toward "maximums." It puts providers between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, they need to justify how much parking is needed, but on the other hand, they don't want to build more parking than is really needed.

In some cases, part of the answer might be to build parking

Continued on Page 18

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## Parking is No. 1 in Patient Satisfaction

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decks. But that can create other issues as well. For example, surface parking lots can be somewhat temporary uses. Parking decks are not as temporary, and they cost significantly more to build.

Surface parking lots allow for quick solutions to parking demands and can be removed fairly easily if that land is needed for building construction. With parking decks, the overall master plan must be fully developed to ensure that that land won't be needed for something else in the near future.

Regardless of the choice (surface parking lots or parking decks), all healthcare leaders need to make an assessment of their parking situation beginning with current conditions; they need to assess parking user-friendliness. What is the customer satisfaction level right now? Are people confused when they arrive at a facility? Are patients/visitors parking spaces three blocks away?

With proper planning for parking, healthcare facilities can have the beneficial qualities they need today, as well as room for logical expansion tomorrow.

*Vince Ellwood is a Senior Vice President and Site Designer with HDR Architecture Inc. He can be reached at [vince.ellwood@hdrinc.com](mailto:vince.ellwood@hdrinc.com).*

PT

## INDUSTRY NOTES

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ence working in the construction field with eight years working specifically in precast concrete. Macaw's combination of construction and precast experience, as well as a civil engineering degree, will provide designers, engineers and contractors with valuable insight to assist them on precast uses and pricing.

**Walter P. Moore** has been chosen the No. 1 "Best Structural Engineering Firm to Work For" in the third annual Structural Engineer contest. Firms were ranked based on the quality of their workplace environment. Companies in the competition ranged in size from 12 to more than 1,000 employees. All participating firms completed an extensive questionnaire about their workplace and conducted an employee satisfaction survey among their staff.

**Secura Key**, due to explosive growth in card production and RFID products, has purchased a spacious new building to accommodate manufacturing, warehousing and general offices. The new facilities, at 20301 Nordhoff St. in Chatsworth, CA, are just a quarter-mile from the company's old plant. Secura Key has operated in Los Angeles County's San Fernando Valley ever since it began in 1971, and retaining their experienced and loyal workforce was a priority in selecting the new location.

PT

## NEW PRODUCTS

### EXTREME UNVEILS NEW REG-L1 LICENSE PLATE CAPTURE CAMERA



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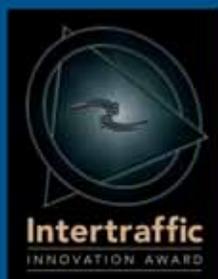
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# Are Your Vehicles Ready for Winter?

By Hollis Allen

**T**hough we would all like to hang onto the warm days of summer, winter weather is inevitable, and you don't want to be caught out in the cold when it comes to your vehicles. A little effort on your part now will save you a lot of time and money down the road.

Business owners and fleet managers who make sure their vehicles are ready for winter can drive down costs while increasing the operating efficiency of their fleet. With routine maintenance, a company's fleet can become one of the most controllable expenses, especially for companies with smaller fleets of 125 or fewer vehicles that depend on every one of them operating at peak capacity. According to the experienced mechanics and accredited Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) technicians at Enterprise Fleet Services, a good place to start is by following some simple maintenance tips:

- **Winter Check.** Inspect wiper

blades to make sure windshield washers are working and washer fluid reservoirs are full. Check each vehicle's battery and electrical system before the onset of winter to avoid getting stranded in bad weather. Also, check all belts and hoses for softness and wear.

- **Oil Changes.** Most people know that a vehicle's oil should be changed at certain mileage intervals. But vehicles that idle for long periods of time, such as service or delivery vehicles, should also be measured using time. Vehicles that spend more time idling than driving should get their oil changed every 200 hours of engine operation.

- **Transmission Maintenance.** Electronically controlled transmissions require more maintenance. Change the transmission filter and fluid about every 30,000 miles or less for vehicles pulling heavy loads or trailers. Under certain conditions, such as a major internal component

failure, it may be less expensive to replace the entire unit with a remanufactured one than to spend a lot of money on labor for a repair. A remanufactured transmission offers better reliability and usually a longer warranty, and you can take the vehicle to any dealer for work, eliminating the trouble of seeking out a shop for future repairs.

- **Warranty Repairs.** Failing to adhere to specific guidelines established by the manufacturer may prevent repairs from being covered by warranty, so check the owner's manual to ensure that you are keeping up with your maintenance checks.

- **Filter Changes.** Replace the oil filter, air filter, fuel filter, automatic transmission filter and crankcase filter at regular intervals to prolong the service life of the vehicle and lower repair costs. Consult your owner's manual or fleet services company for information on the correct intervals for specific vehicles.

• **Tire Replacement.** Match dimensions indicated on the tire information decal for new tires. This will help avoid inaccurate speedometer/odometer readings, ABS brake malfunctions and multiple engine and transmission errors. If a vehicle's tires reach 3/32 of an inch or less in tread depth, it's a sign to replace them. Some vehicles with all-wheel drive require replacement of all tires at the same time because of potential driveline problems. Consult your owner's manual or fleet services company to determine if this is the case with your vehicles.

• **Tire Maintenance.** Use a quality gauge to check tire pressure at least once a week. Correct tire pressure helps extend tire tread life and gas mileage and contributes to good traction and handling. Incorrect tire pressure can lead to premature tire wear, lessened fuel economy or possible tire failure up to and including a blowout. Rotation of the tires, recommended every 10,000 miles, also will extend tire life. This is especially true for front-wheel-drive vehicles.

• **Engine Oil.** Always use an equivalently rated API (Automotive Petroleum Institute) oil that is recommended by the vehicle manufacturer. This will ensure proper protection of vital engine components at all temperatures and running speeds, assist in starting on cold days, and help you get the most from your vehicle.

• **Gasoline Selection.** The gas you choose can directly affect fleet cost and vehicle performance. When choosing a grade or octane of fuel for your company's vehicle, consult your owner's manual. Gasoline that is too low in octane can drastically affect vehicle performance, while gasoline that is too high in octane can drive up expenses unnecessarily.

*Hollis Allen is the manager of Enterprise Fleet Services' National Service Department and works with its team of veteran mechanics and accredited Automotive Service Excellence technicians to serve the maintenance needs of businesses with mid-size fleets. Visit the company's web site at [www.enterprise.com/fleets](http://www.enterprise.com/fleets).*

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# Hurricane Wilma Can't Stop Active Regionals

This is the second in a continuing series of articles about regional parking associations around the country. In October, *PT* Editor John Van Horn attended the combined Middle Atlantic and Virginias meeting and the Florida meeting.

## Florida Weathers Wilma

Hurricane Wilma didn't stop the Florida Parking Association and President Sue Ollie from meeting at the Sawgrass Marriott near Jacksonville. Although a sizable number of FPA attendees were digging out from hurricane damage in South Florida, attendance was more than 100, out of 150 who had signed up. Ollie was pleased.

"We have two factors that make our organization successful," said Ollie, Parking Administrator for the city of West Palm Beach. "The first is our fast-growing state; the second is our terrific team. The mix makes for a very successful association.

"More than 800 people a day arrive in Florida and stay," she said. "Many of our 'former' small towns are growing fast and have parking issues for the first time. New parking administrators are being asked to solve them, and they have no clue what to do. They call us and ask for help, and we give it.



"FPA members volunteer to help those with parking issues. We refer them to others with similar problems and solutions.

In exchange, we ask them to become active members," Ollie said. "This isn't an issue just for cities. Growth puts extreme parking stress on universities, hospitals, airports, theme parks, hotels and business complexes. We are an equal opportunity organization; if you are in parking, we want you as a member.

"Our leadership team in the association makes a difference too. We do broadcast e-mails, publish three-four newsletters a year, keep our Web site current, and most important, we pick up the

phone and call all the members, often just to chat. It's this contact that makes a difference," Ollie said. "We get a personal commitment for attendance at the conference and seminars. Plus, we ask them to help other members who are having issues. It's one-on-one, and it works.

"One of the biggest issues in parking in Florida is simply finding employees," she said. "The cost of living is going up fast, particularly housing. Most employees can't afford to live near where they work. It's a real problem."

When asked why the parking industry simply didn't raise the rates and then pay more to cover the costs of living for their employees, she smiled and said, "Well, in the end, we have to be realistic."

(Ollie has a hint for program planners: IPI CAPP candidates and professionals need speaking assignments to receive and maintain their certification. It's a good place to look for potential speakers.)

## MAPA/PAV Gets Edge of the Storm

When Middle Atlantic Parking Association President Ray Stoner and VP Mike Nichols met with *PT* during their organization's annual meeting in October, the backlash from Hurricane Wilma didn't stop the two from speaking candidly about the group, its meetings and its purpose.

"MAPA caters to mid-level management," Stoner said. "We try to set our meetings so they are convenient and cost-effective. Senior management may be able to afford the time and money to attend one of the national events, like NPA and IPI, but the majority of those in our industry can't. The regional groups like MAPA tend to focus on the training and communications needs of others."

"We meet when we do because it's the end of the season; the weather is still good, but we can get an affordable rate in the hotels. In this case, \$92 a night is super," added Nichols.



MAPA Vice President Mike Nichols, Administrator Sandy Rogers and President Ray Stoner at the MAPA/PAV conference held in October in Ocean City, MD.



Sue Ollie, President of the Florida Parking Association.

Stoner, who is head of parking for the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority, expressed some concern about the "flat" nature of the membership numbers in MAPA. "We are down a bit this year. We have been reaching out, but we fall short in telling potential members what's in it for them."

"We have difficulty communicating to operators particularly that it's to their benefit to send their staff to our meetings," said Nichols, who is Marketing Director for PMI in Washington, DC. "It is an expense to send staff, and bottom-line managers must see a return. Many feel that due to the fluid nature of employment -- that is, staff moving from operator to operator -- that they are training the staff of their competition. It's short-sighted, but that's what they think."

"It is interesting that our most successful events have been our one-day seminars," said Stoner. "We had well over 100 people at our revenue control event held earlier in the year. It was inexpensive, and attendees learned a lot. We will most likely be focusing on these types of events in the future."

"In the end, to make these associations work, you need a tangible result -- something the members and their managers can measure," Stoner said.

There were 55 attendees and 21 exhibitors at the MAPA event this year. It was held in conjunction with the Parking Association of the Virginias. It had five seminars -- four concerning security in garages and the fifth on pay-on-foot conversions.

**PT**

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# DEATH B

## A Voice I Hadn't Heard In ...

Semi-retired PI Paul Manning and his son, Paul Junior, were stunned when their prospective client, Grace Lundquist, was shot in their office just before she could tell them about some mysterious happenings at a local parking garage. She had been taken to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and was out of danger. They were discussing what to do next when the phone rang. It was Bill Murray, the Sheriff's Department detective who had gone to the hospital to interview her. Someone had gotten through the ER security and shot up the recovery room where Grace was. There were people down. The shooter got away in a black towncar. They jumped in Paul Junior's Jeep and headed for Cedars.

**I**t was only about a three-minute ride down La Cienega to Cedars-Sinai. Paulo made it in two. When we turned the corner onto Beverly and the hospital ER, I was certain we were going to be its next customers. Jeeps have a high center of gravity. Paulo was smiling as we stopped short of the yellow tape.

There were police from three jurisdictions -- the LAPD and the Sheriff's, and Beverly Hills was directing traffic. We were literally a couple of blocks from each of their turfs. There were choppers overhead with the names of local radio and TV stations. This was going to rival the O.J. Simpson low-speed chase.

Fortunately, Bill Murray was standing outside and waved us through the line.

"Sorry to have overreacted on the phone," Bill said. "These security guys here were great. Oh, the bad guy got some shots off, but the dog handler turned his shepherd, Goldie, loose. The shooter took one look at those teeth and headed for the door.

"The 'people down' were just about everyone in the area who hit the deck when they heard the shots.

No one was injured," Bill said, "but my guess is that the hood with the gun may have a problem where the dog took a piece out of his leg."

Our postures reflected our relief as Paulo and I went back to the car and regrouped. We decided the plan of action we had devised before the phone call was a good one. We called Shirley, and she let our operative Jim Walsh know that he should get moving on tracking down the towncar. Paulo would run over and sniff around Grace's office and the parking garage. He would leave me here where I would see what I could find out about the shooter and talk to Bill about the forensic evidence that may have been uncovered.

I know, I know -- this is a police matter and we are private. But nobody, I mean nobody shoots a client in my office and gets away with it. Bill Murray was going to have his hands full negotiating with the LAPD. This was becoming a big case. Grace was shot in West Hollywood, the purview of the L.A. County sheriff. Cedars-Sinai, the scene of the latest shootout, was in the city of Los Angeles. Grace's office was in L.A. too.

The main question would be who wanted the publicity. As long as it was good, then obviously everyone would want it. But when it went sour, you wouldn't be able to find a public relations officer anywhere in sight.

As I thought about it, the LAPD might not look too good allowing a major hospital emergency room to be shot up right under its nose, so it might just let Bill Murray take the case. Boy, was I wrong.

The news conference was already being set up. It looked as if some movie star was being perp-walked after confessing to entertaining a working girl in his Maserati. There were dozens of satellite trucks, choppers and slick-looking reporters, men and women, each doing a "stand up" trying to find some little spin that would get this piece on the nightly news from New York, and maybe a promotion.

The LAPD was everywhere and organizing the press like you would organize a stampede. It was fun to watch. Commander Bill Vose held up his hands in a plea, or was it a prayer, for quiet. I had known Bill forever. He had been my partner at the LAPD and