

PARKING

EPISODE II
THE
RENDEZVOUS

By JVH

later my boss when I got fired from the force. He had tried to protect me, but it wasn't in the cards. We kept in touch, and have remained good friends. Bill had worked his way up through the department and now was a honcho downtown. He was the "go to" person when something big was happening and the press needed a statement. With his being involved, this might just be bigger than I thought.

Bill tried to placate the reporters, but to no avail. They wanted something, and he had nothing. Finally, he told them there would be a full report and press conference the next day downtown. I caught his eye as he walked away from the microphones.

He came over and shook my hand. "I should have known you would be in the middle of this mess," Bill said with a smile. "Here we have a complicated turf war starting, an unknown shooter or shooters, a wounded witness to who knows what, and you and your kid right in the middle of it."

"Now just a minute, Bill. We were simply doing our jobs. It's not our fault someone wanted our client dead. Frankly, we don't know anything more than you do; besides, the Sheriff's have the lead on this, not you."

"Well, our brass just spoke to the sheriff, and he graciously handed it over to us," Bill said, again with the

smile. "And I now have a first: I actually have information before you do."

"What? Give!" I actually had my hand on his lapel. Bill Vose and I are very close, which is fortunate because most cops don't like being touched, particularly by a PI.

"OK, OK, calm down," he said. "It's getting late and I'm going off-duty. Let's go across the street to the Barefoot Café and have a drink."

The café wasn't exactly a cop bar. It was a little froufrou and fit well into the trendy area where West Hollywood, L.A. and Beverly Hills met. But they had good single-malts and a nice patio where we could sit out and enjoy the afternoon.

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Death by Parking

from Page 25

Bill ordered an 18-year-old Glenlivet. As a whisky, it's not spectacular, but it's taken me nearly 30 years to wean him off Maker's Mark. I felt perverse and had a Laphroaig, with a splash of water. We took a couple of minutes to enjoy our drinks and then Bill began.

"We aren't sure, but we think this may have something to do with union organizing."

"What?" I said. "Unions? In a parking lot? I can't believe it. Why would someone want to organize a parking attendant?"

"I don't know much about it," Bill said. "It's being handled by our organized crime division. However, I do know that the deck next to your client's building is one of the first to be organized in the city. I don't think the legitimate unions are involved, but this one has seemingly close ties to Vegas and New Jersey."

This is where I came in. That first case years ago that put my firm on the

map was about the Mob and parking and money laundering. A greedy "businessman" who owned a parking operation, as well as other interests, had been using it to launder money that he made illegally in numbers and the rackets.

The East Coast wise guys had set up a beautiful Italian woman, who was a "B movie" actress and onetime flame of Howard Hughes, to take over the parking operation. I stumbled right into the middle of it and with unerring detective skills, plus a lot of luck, stopped the process. I hadn't thought about parking, except as a place to put my car, in nearly four decades.

"Wow," I said, "those guys can play rough. I thought the parking business had been clean for years."

"The parking business itself is," Bill said. And he left it at that.

I paid the bill and called Jim Walsh to come pick me up. As I waited, I began to think that Paulo might be walking into a hornet's nest. I called his cellphone and it kicked into voice-mail. I called Shirley, and she hadn't heard from him. This was

unusual. He always checked in whenever he left an interview.

As I was musing, my phone rang. It was a woman's voice. I thought I recognized the Southern European accent -- a voice soft as moonlight dancing on the Spanish Steps in Rome, but clear as the howl of a wolf on the slopes of Mt. Etna.

"So, Mr. Paul Manning, you are sticking your nose into my business again. This time, you and your son -- Paul Junior, isn't it -- won't be so lucky." The phone went dead.

To be continued ...

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Hoboken Back in the Headlines

With apologies to my friends in the automated parking industry, I bring this sad story to your attention. Well, I'm not alone; there have been a dozen articles written in local and national papers about the problems in Hoboken, NJ, in the past few weeks. Things aren't going well at this automated facility.



Cars in final test at Hoboken garage.

The back story:

Gerhard Haag and Robotic Parking got a contract to build an automated garage in Hoboken. It was the perfect application for the technology. Everyone was excited. Thus began an almost seven-year litany of issues, problems, lawsuits, blame, success and failure.

Don't think for a moment that Gerhard is the only one at fault in this story. There is plenty of blame to go around. It includes the general contractor, the mayor at the time, the parking authority, the local power company, the designer, the consultant, the architect, the person writing the specifications, the weather, and well, virtually everyone involved in the project deserves some part of the blame.

The project was way behind

completion -- almost two years. When done, everyone was arguing as to whether or not it worked as it was supposed to, and who is to supply personnel to run it.

This is one of those situations

where there is no absolute right or wrong. The issue is that even today, problems exist and from time to time folks have to wait a few hours to get their cars out. There is also the odd

Continued on Page 28

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Hoboken Back in the Headlines

from Page 27

vehicle that is dropped from the third floor. Not good.

Naturally, the city is running for the hills, hiding behind contracts and lawyers. Gerhard is frustrated, of course, because he thinks the owner should begin to take some responsibility for what he bought.

And there you have it -- the reason a niche industry in our business is stalled and having such difficulty getting going. It is a classic case of what can go wrong in a project.

I remember years ago at a meeting of the Automated and Mechanical Parking Association, when rumblings of the problems at Hoboken were starting, Arturo Ressi of Trevipark spoke out strongly. "We manufacturers should do whatever it takes to make Hoboken work. Gerhard needs our support and should get it."

Ah, the great Italian solution. All for one and one for all (or was that the Three Musketeers?). Of course, Gerhard didn't get it. Most of the other manufacturers really were looking for him to fail. Arturo was right, of

**Competitors are laughing
at Robotic's problems.
Little do they realize that
they are joined at the hip.**

course. The less-than-stellar performance of the Hoboken garage has put many other projects on hold. Gerhard's competitors send me articles about the problems in Hoboken. They roll their eyes and chuckle about the issues.

What is most sad is that Gerhard Haag was the only manufacturer that put his money where his mouth is. He built a test system in Ohio. He showed people how it would work. And he got the deal. Of course, he didn't know how to work in an environment like Hoboken. Power, influence, politics, money and perhaps a bit of rubbing right up against the law were involved. Not a good place to cut your teeth on a new technology and in a country where the customs are foreign.

The result is a stalled technology. Virtually no other automated systems have been installed in the U.S. They work all over the world, but no one wants to be the first one here. (OK, there is one running in DC, and 50,000 that are going to break ground "next month.")

One can only hope that this gets sorted out. But knowing all the players on all sides personally, I'm not holding my breath. Competitors are laughing at Robotic's problems. Little do they realize that they are joined at the hip.

JVH

PT

Reino Enforcement Merges With Citation Management, Acquires Duncan

Reino Enforcement Technology, a provider of integrated parking and enforcement management solutions, has increased in size considerably in the past two months. It has acquired Duncan Parking Technologies – the largest supplier of single space parking meters in the North American parking market - and has merged with Citation Management - a provider of citation processing and delinquent payment collection services. These moves position the company as a sole-source provider of on-street parking asset management products and services to Cities, Universities and Parking Authorities.

Citation Management is based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and is recognized as an industry leader in the provision of ticket processing and collection services to the municipal and higher education markets. It brings to Reino an expansive, service center network with national coverage, capable of managing all aspects of citation and collections processing.

Citation Management will maintain its operational headquarters in Milwaukee and Gary Smith will continue to serve as the President. All of Citation Management's employees will join the Reino group providing uninterrupted continuity for all of our existing customers.

Duncan brings to Reino a history of market leadership based on strong technology, dedicated customer service and an expansive, customer base spread through six continents and over sixty countries. According to Reino, it will also enjoy the benefits of Duncan's history and reputation for product excellence and industry best practices.

Duncan Parking Technologies will maintain its operational headquarters in Harrison, Arkansas and David Dull will serve as the President and CEO. The Duncan team will continue with their commitment to their customers and will remain focused on responding to their high standard delivery requirements and the provision of quality products and services.

"Reino Enforcement Technology is excited to have the teams from Duncan and Citation Management join our company," said Managing Director, Patrick Allaway. "Their high standards in product and customer satisfaction will strengthen our integrated solution offering."

The acquisitions place Reino Enforcement Technology as North America's largest integrated parking and enforcement solutions company with nearly 400 staff working across engineering, sales and marketing, finance, operations, customer service and product support.

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NPA Hears Real Life, Not The Movie

By Frank Abagnale

“The fastest-growing financial crimes in America today are check fraud and identity theft.” That’s how Frank Abagnale, made famous by the movie “Catch Me If You Can,” began his keynote speech to the National Parking Association’s annual meeting in October in Miami Beach.

The con man turned FBI consultant and expert on so-called “white collar” crime gave a less romantic view of his life than that shown in the movie, in which he was played by Leonardo DiCaprio. The movie was based on a book of the same name, but Abagnale had only four meetings with the book’s co-author and never met with director Steven Spielberg, who to date has never even had a conversation with Abagnale.

Although the first part of his presentation was interest-

ing and entertaining, it was the second part that riveted the audience to its seats. With the help of a brochure provided by Abagnale’s sponsor, the Discover Network, here are some first-person excerpts:

The Nilson Report estimates check fraud losses to be about \$20 billion a year. The American Bankers Association has stated check fraud is growing 25 percent per year. Check fraud gangs are hardworking and creative. They constantly try new techniques to beat the banking system and steal money. Historically, the banks have been liable for these losses. However, recent changes in the Uniform Commercial Code share the loss with the depositor.

The Federal Trade Commission reported that nearly 9.9 million Americans have been victims of identity theft, costing consumers \$5 billion and banks and businesses \$48 bil-

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lion every year. Because this crime is so simple to commit, I believe identity theft will become one of the most profitable criminal activities in history.

There are endless opportunities for a criminal to obtain the necessary information to commit identity theft.

Let me illustrate just two, beginning with your visit to a doctor. As a new patient, the receptionist asks you to complete a form that asks for your name, address, phone number; your employer's name, address and phone number; and your health history. They copy your insurance card, which includes your Social Security number. Your co-pay is paid with a check drawn on your bank account. You have just provided enough information for someone to become you.

Another example: You walk into an upscale department store to make a purchase. You take your selection to the cashier and write a check. On that check is your name, address and home phone number, the name of your bank and its address, and your bank account number. The cashier asks for your driver's license -- in 19 states, the license number is your Social Security number. The cashier memorizes the birth date on your license, and then asks for your work phone number, which will give them the name and address of your employer. Once again, a thief has sufficient information to apply for credit in your name.

I am 56. As a [young man], I did things that today, as a husband and father, an educator and consultant, I am not proud of. Recounting one youthful experience may be illustrative:

In my youth, when I wanted to establish a new identity (so that I could open a bank account and pass bad checks), I would go to the Department of Vital Records (in

As a young man I did things that today I'm not proud of.

any city I was in). I would ask to see the death records for 1948, the year I was born. Every fifth or sixth entry was an infant who had died at birth. I would write down the death information and later apply for a birth certificate in that name. I would fill out a form, pay \$10, and obtain a legitimate birth certificate. I would go to the DMV and get a license with my picture, my description, and somebody else's name. I had 50 legitimate driver's licenses.

Now, 35 years later, you can buy a CD-ROM with birth and death records and apply for a birth certificate by mail.



Keynote Speaker Frank Abagnale with NPA Executive Director Marty Stein at the convention in Miami Beach.

There are Web sites that sell Social Security numbers for \$49.95. Their advertisements claim that they can tell you anything about anybody. I researched these companies. All you provide is someone's name, address and DOB and they will tell you everything you want to know, including spouse and children's names.

For the identity theft victim, the nightmare has just begun. On average, it costs a victim \$1,173 and 175 man-hours to get a credit report straightened out. Fixing the problem is not as simple as saying "that wasn't me." You must prove you did not apply for that loan. To fix things, you must first convince the credit card or finance company. Then you must convince all three credit bureaus. In most cases, the credit bureaus refuse to delete the dispute from your credit files. Instead, they put an asterisk and say, "Customer disputes this Visa charge; claims they were a victim of identity theft." The result is that anyone accessing your credit report, whether a potential employer or a company considering granting you credit, may question whether you were really a victim or if you were just ripping somebody off.

I am personally concerned about identity theft. A few years ago, I subscribed to a service that notifies me each time my credit report is accessed. Privacy Guard (www.privacyguard.com) provides me with the contact information of any company that obtained my credit report, as well as the means to correct false data. I consider their annual fee money well spent.

Frank Abagnale can be reached through his Web site, www.abagnale.com. He is a paid consultant to Discover and Trilegiant, owners of www.privacyguard.com.

PT

IN 1905, IT WAS $E=MC^2$ -- NOW, A NEW PARKING FORMULA?

Observe Parking From the Outside

By Joseph P. Sculli

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles seeking to answer the question "Can a formula be devised to predict the potential output or 'qualitative outcomes,' associated with parking or transportation management programs?"

To commemorate Albert Einstein's 1905 formula calculating the energy output from the atom, *Parking Today* (November 2005) asserted that the potential output of parking or transportation programs could be measured through a five-step approach:

1. Obtaining stakeholders' opinions on program performance.
2. Conducting first-hand observations of your operations.

3. Analyzing program data, and if necessary, developing the means to collect other key data.

4. Conducting field activity surveys.

5. Assessing the true effectiveness of the supporting infrastructure (e.g., organizational design, labor agreements, overarching governance).

Would Clint Eastwood think you were "feeling lucky" in your hunt for parking?

In **Step One**, 12 actions were listed to measure how well the program was understood and viewed by key stakeholders. The manager who implements Step One views his or her

operations through the eyes of outside constituents to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses to capitalize on the former and improve on the latter. If Step One views the program from the outsider's perspective, then Step Two places the program under a microscope designed for your eyes only (thanks, 007).

In Step Two, your mission (should you decide to accept it) is to see your program again, for the first time, from an outsider's perspective. You may have had a hand in program design, and you may have written some of the procedures being – or not being – followed. Making yourself the customer lets you experience for yourself (rather than just observe), the good, the bad



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and the ugly of your own service provision. One way is to conduct covert observations of your service quality. As a starting point, the following ideas are submitted for your consideration:

- Use your personal vehicle to locate an on-street parking space at noontime or other peak period. How long did it take or how difficult was it to locate parking? Would Clint Eastwood think you were "feeling lucky" in your hunt for parking?

- Test the enforcement program in your personal vehicle or rental car by not feeding the meter to see how long it takes before you're ticketed. What portion of violations is ticketed on your repeated drive-bys? Is there unticketed double-parking where there shouldn't be?

- Call the customer service number on the back of the ticket to "feel" how you're being treated. Were you frustrated by your own automated voice response system?

- Stand in the heat, rain or cold and see if your park-and-ride bus or circulator shuttle arrives on schedule. Better yet, use these services for a week to really gauge their quality.

- Are your buses and shelters clean and inviting? On a clear day, can you see forever, or does 11 in the morning look more like a rainy night in Georgia?

- Do your bus seats remind you of Thanksgiving at Grandma's: You can see or smell the stuffing? How clean are the carpets and walls in your office's common areas or employee locker rooms?

- Do field employees represent the program as they should, in terms of dress, bearing, courtesy, demeanor and language?

- Anonymously, strike up conversations with your customers on the street, in the garage or at the bus stop. Talk about their impressions of "your" service quality. Visit your cashiers, facility attendants and other activities at off-hours. Are buses laying-over where they shouldn't?

- When you walk through one of your agency's garages, do the dirt and the grime on the floors and doors want to jump right up and into your pores?

OK, maybe the last one's a stretch, but there are at least three overall lessons from the ideas above (I'm sure you could name more):

Lesson One: *There's nothing like walking a mile in your customer's shoes.* It's one thing to read a daily operations summary from the comfort of

your desk, located perhaps 20 feet from your reserved parking space. But like "The Love Boat," adventure is waiting for you at the park-and-ride or the crowded street.

Lesson Two: *Insist on cleanliness, if nothing else; it means a lot.* Equipment or facilities might be old, but judging from 20 years of consulting experience -- not to mention riding a mass transit system everyday -- I know some managers just don't get it. There's no excuse for exposing your employees and customers to dirty facilities and equipment. And a customer's first experience of your operation -- or his 100th -- is a lasting one. As an airline executive once said, stains on the flip-tray imply poor engine maintenance.

Lesson Three: *An energetic, involved manager can make a program successful.* The manager's personal energy, involvement and field presence can help ensure that standards set in the office are achieved in the field. The involved manager strives for improvement, and as a pretty smart contemporary of Einstein's has been quoted: *"Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits."*

So, by now, we have Steps One and Two, the first variables in our formula to measure the output of a parking or transportation program's true product.

But formulas on the blackboard eventually have to be tested in the field, and it is only by attempting these steps and acting on what you find will you realize any benefits from the time spent reading these articles.

So where the first chapter in this series closed with a quote from Einstein in recognition of the 100th anniversary of $e=mc^2$, it is fitting to end here by hearing from the U.S. president during science's momentous year of 1905, that man of action named Theodore Roosevelt: "In the end, progress is accomplished by the man who does things" and "It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed."

Joseph P. Sciulli is Vice President and Senior Operations Consultant of Chance Management Advisors. He can be reached at joseph.sciulli@chancemanagement.com.

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Jet Fighters and Golf Clubs: Similar to Parking Garages?

By Ken Baur and Gregg Blasak

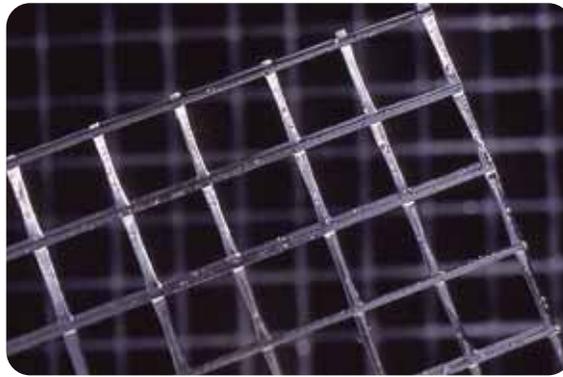
For years, architects, engineers and parking consultants have looked to precast concrete as a viable technology for parking structures. After all, precast concrete's consistency, erection speed, long-term durability, aesthetic flexibility and fire resistance are desirable qualities for most projects.

However, precast double-T's have two challenges not uncommon to large concrete components. First, although often lighter than poured-in-place options, they're still heavy, requiring substantial structural support. Second, their steel reinforcing is sometimes prone to corrosion, especially when vehicles carry in chlorine-laden ice, snow and water, or when salt is used to melt ice on the deck. When the steel corrodes, it doubles in volume and can cause cracking or spalling, as well as unsightly staining -- all problems the building or garage owner wants to avoid.

A new approach to reinforcing involves the use of carbon-fiber grid as a replacement for conventional steel-mesh reinforcing in the double tee double-T flange. Carbon fiber is noncorrosive, which virtually eliminates the problems noted above, as well as the cost of admixtures and barriers used to inhibit corrosion. At the same time, carbon-fiber reinforcing can reduce flange depth -- leading to a 12 percent reduction in double tee weight -- without compromising performance.

Jet fighters, golf clubs, double-T's

While many people view carbon fiber as an expensive base material for products such as aircraft, tennis racquets, bicycles and motorcycle components, manufacturers have developed lower-cost, industrial-grade carbon fiber for broader use in demand-



Close up of Carbon Fiber Mesh

ing construction applications. As a result, the precast concrete industry has been able to benefit from the same outstanding strength-to-weight ratios and durability characteristics that have made carbon fiber an ideal material to take a jet fighter to Mach 2 or drive golf ball 300 yards.

As a lightweight, noncorrosive "enabling technology," carbon-fiber grid reinforcing allows double-T's to be lighter, more durable and often less costly in the long run than conventional precast products that rely on steel reinforcing.

Exceptionally strong, nonmagnetic C-Grid carbon-fiber grid reinforcing can support up to 6,000 lbs/lf and has tensile strength more than four times that of steel. C-Grid also absorbs strain without yielding and displays linear elastic behavior. Its epoxy coating chemistry and small-aperture grid design provide excellent bonding to concrete and superior crack control.

Carbon fiber's cover story

Steel's tendency to corrode forces double-T manufacturers to add concrete cover to the flange with the sole purpose of protecting the steel. In fact, most double-T's have a minimum flange depth of 4 inches to provide ample cover for the steel mesh. That results in extra weight just to

safeguard the reinforcing.

Carbon fiber's highly efficient structure, corrosion-resistance and strength allow precast manufacturers to reduce the amount of concrete cover in each double tee flange by up to 3/4 inch. (Conventional prestressed strands are still used in the stems because they are extremely well-protected by more than 12 inches of concrete as measured from the top of the flange.)

Strong and durable

Protecting conventional concrete decks on parking structures requires constant vigilance. A litany of chemical treatments are typically used during double-T fabrication and after installation to inhibit and delay the corrosion of steel-mesh reinforcing in the flange.

With the noncorrosive carbon-fiber reinforcing, you can forget about sacrificial barrier coatings on the steel, and eliminate the need to add costly corrosion inhibiting admixtures to the concrete or to apply sealants to the precast deck surface. And best of all, you can eliminate the cost and hassle of re-applying these sealants every five years.

Used to enhance durability

A 270,000-square-foot, four-level parking structure in suburban Milwaukee has carbon-fiber reinforced double-T's on its top deck. The owner -- a Fortune 500 company -- opted for carbon-fiber reinforced double-T's because of their long-term durability and resistance to corrosion, especially important considering the deck is exposed to Milwaukee's diverse weather -- everything from ice storms and severe snow to summer heat waves. The 15-foot-wide double-T's have a two-hour fire rating to match the balance of the garage.



Carbon fiber is placed in precast "T" prior to curing.

New technology, familiar names

The introduction of carbon-fiber reinforcing heralds the first major advance in precast technology in decades -- perhaps since the introduction of precast itself. Several of the nation's leading precast companies -- such as Oldcastle, High Concrete Group, Metromont and Gate Precast -

cycle costs dramatically, especially after the first decade of operation.

As an important innovation, the use of carbon-fiber reinforcing promises unparalleled corrosion resistance by eliminating the use of steel reinforcing double-T flanges. The resulting weight reduction and life cycle improvements usually provide benefits over conventional

carbon fiber is an ideal material that can take a jet fighter to Mach 2 or drive golf ball 300 yards

- and its suppliers have collaborated as the AltusGroup to develop, test and market carbon-fiber reinforced precast components under the Carbon-Cast brand name. Their partnership has enabled the first-ever national rollout of a novel precast brand and establishes a new model for the introduction of technologies to the precast concrete industry.

From an initial cost standpoint, carbon fiber tends to be more expensive than steel mesh. However, when one considers the skyrocketing cost of steel, the cost for corrosion inhibitors, potential reductions in substructure and site costs, and increased life space, carbon-fiber reinforcing lowers life

cycle costs dramatically, especially after the first decade of operation. The use of carbon-fiber reinforcing will grow in popularity as its effectiveness is validated by a variety of installations.

Ken Baur, P.E., who works in the Architectural Panels and Bridge Decks unit of High Concrete Structures, can be contacted at kbaur@high.net. Gregg Blasak, P.E., is C-Grid Technical Marketing Manager for TechFab and can be contacted at gregg.blasak@hexcel.com. Both are members of the AltusGroup technical committee

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NEW PRODUCTS

ANTI-CORROSION TIMES' NOW AVAILABLE



The Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute (CRSI) of Schaumburg, IL, recently published the 2005 issue of "Anti-Corrosion Times." This eight-page, four-color newsletter features both ongoing and completed projects, as well as certification and industry news. Developed for industry use, the newsletter is produced to disseminate current information to manufacturers, consultants, engineers, owners, state agency personnel and others interested in epoxy-coated reinforcement.

The feature story in this latest issue is the Capitol Visitor Center in Washington, DC. Construction began in July 2002 and is on track for completion in September 2006. This \$351-million 580,000-square-foot building will adjoin the Capitol building and serve as a place to welcome visitors to the Capitol.

For more information, log on to www.parkingtoday.com/epip

SILICA FUME ASSOCIATION PUBLISHES A USER'S MANUAL



The Silica Fume Association (SFA) has published a silica fume user's manual. A comprehensive guide for specifiers, ready mix and precast concrete producers and contractors, it describes the best practice for the successful use of silica fume in the production of high-performance concrete (HPC). The manual was produced under a cooperative agreement between the association and the Federal Highway

Administration and will be of great value to the HPC Bridge Community.

Topics covered in detail include proportioning, handling, batching and mixing, placing, finishing and curing silica-fume concrete, with specific emphasis on bridge deck and parking structure applications. The Silica Fume User's Manual will be distributed in a bound soft cover edition and an electronic version on CD-ROM.

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