

CASE STUDY

PARK-RITE: ONE OF DETROIT'S LEADING PARKING OPERATORS



Park-Rite is one of Detroit's leading parking operators, with over 30 parking locations across the city, as well as in Royal Oak and Ann Arbor, Michigan. Founded more than 40 years ago, Park-Rite has established itself as the region's premier parking operator, managing parking for some of the city's most recognizable locations, including Ford Field, home of the Detroit Lions.

Park-Rite built its name on customer service, and the company boasts that its customers "know when they see the Park-Rite logo, they will have an excellent parking experience." But when you are responsible for so many parking locations, it can be challenging to maintain the excellent customer service that Park-Rite is known for.

Staffing, in particular can be an issue.

"Before Parker, customer service was one of our biggest issues. Staffing so many parking lots in Detroit has been traditionally very difficult for us. I spent a lot of time managing employees."

-Nick Aubrey, Managing Partner of Park-Rite



A BIT OF CONTEXT

As good as modern parking access and revenue control equipment is, things can still go wrong. Sometimes it's an issue of payment equipment or gates not working properly and sometimes it's just a case of the parker having trouble figuring out how to use the equipment. Regardless of the reason, when problems arise, Parker's trained customer service professionals are there, ready to resolve the issue and help the driver get on his or her way.

But in the automated age of parking, it's not always easy to provide excellent customer service. The whole point of automation is to make parking more convenient for drivers. But in an automated facility, when things go wrong—when the equipment doesn't operate as it should, or the driver has trouble using a particular piece of technology—there's no one there to solve the problem.

“Customer service is the most important part of operating a parking garage or lot. Parking owners and operators face an extraordinary amount of competition, and the one thing that sets them apart from their competition is the parking experience.”

- Brian Wolff, President & CEO of Parker Technology

“That’s where we come in,” said Tammy Baker, COO at Parker Technology. “Our customer service representatives are fully trained to solve any problem the driver may encounter, and they are available at the push of a button. Our customer service representatives are available 24/7 and can be reached instantly. It’s like having staff on-site to solve parkers’ problems, without having to take on the expense of keeping staff on-site.”

For Nick Aubrey, there was no question that once they made the move to automation, the calls were going to be directed to a strategic partner. “We’re parking executives, not call center managers,” said Aubrey. “We want to play to our strengths of running lean, profitable garages.”

In order to determine who this strategic partner would be, Aubrey moved through a 3-step process, as outlined below.



STEP #1: SELECTING A SCALABLE PARCS PARTNER

The Park-Rite team made the decision to bring automation to the first of their nearly 60 facilities in the greater Detroit area in early 2018. The first step was finding the right PARCS platform that would give Aubrey and his colleagues scalability, future-facing technology, and a great customer experience for monthly and daily parking guests.

After extensive research and numerous site visits, Park-Rite selected Flash (formerly FlashParking). “We loved their use of technology, their ability to roll out software updates and new features remotely, and the overall impression their equipment will give our parking customer by having a state-of-the-art parking experience,” said Aubrey.

STEP #2: DETERMINING THE BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE SOLUTION

Aubrey’s next decision was to find a customer service center that could handle the intercom calls. Options included hiring a generic call center that answered calls for many types of businesses or finding a specialized partner in the parking space



Early on, Flash recommended that Aubrey look at Parker Technology for handling calls. The advantages were many, including:

1. The CSRs were already familiar with Flash equipment, so no extra training would be required to get up-to-speed
2. Parker's patented two-way video intercom technology was already integrated into Flash equipment, thus eliminating the upfront capital to upgrade Park-Rite guests to a premium experience
3. Park-Rite would be able to bring on additional automated facilities using any PARCS system. Parker Technology connects with nearly all brands of PARCS and intercoms, ensuring if Park-Rite were to take on future properties with existing equipment, no expensive capital expense would be incurred to use their solution

After appropriate due diligence and a live demo with one of Parker's CSRs, Aubrey was satisfied that Park-Rite's reputation for quality, experience and integrity would be maintained. "The guest experience matters and the face-to-face video experience with Parker Technology included in the Flash system was going to show our customers that we have top-notch technology."

Getting up and running as preparations were underway for PARCS equipment installation was simple and straightforward.

"The service agreement was simple, clear cut and fair," said Aubrey. "Pricing was appropriate and gave us fixed rates so there would be no surprises."



Step #3: Launching Without Hassles or Surprises

Once the services agreement was signed, the Park-Rite team received business rule templates to determine how Parker's CSRs would handle calls and triage problems. The templates provided Park-Rite with a set of best-practices for handling issues that Aubrey could tweak to fit their business requirements. "It was all so seamless," said Aubrey. "Once we got started, it came together really smoothly. I could focus my job – and not worry about figuring out how to deal with the calls."

By working with a specialized, parking-specific customer service center, Park-Rite eliminated one of the biggest hassles with using an outside service.

"The parking industry has a lot of nuance that requires time and energy to learn and build skills with the CSR team," said Tammy Baker, COO at Parker Technology. "Because we exclusively handle calls from parking facilities, our team can take on a new garage very quickly."

Once Aubrey reviewed the business rules, Parker's implementation team set up Park-Rite's garages in their software platform and trained their CSRs. "We were doing practice calls for Nick and gave the Park-Rite team plenty of time to test things out with the Flash system before going live."

THE END RESULT: A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

Two months after going live, Aubrey gave the entire platform two-thumbs up. “It really has been an easy roll-out, and I’m glad I’m not worrying about having to staff a call center or deal with call center headaches.”

Even though remote attendant services have been outsourced, the parking operator always has their finger on the pulse of customer issues. Park-Rite’s staff has real-time access to facility call analytics, recordings of calls between parking guests and CSRs, and reporting to summarize issues coming into the call center along with how they are resolved.

When calls require on-site attention or resolution outside of the normal day-to-day operations, Parker’s CSRs can put a parking guest on hold and quickly connect with the appropriate Park-Rite manager for further assistance or action. That ensures only the most urgent issues interrupt Park-Rite staff.

“I’d recommend to any of my peers to focus on parking operations – and leave the call center challenges to Parker,” said Aubrey. “As far as I’m concerned, it’s the best solution available for outsourcing parking garage calls and giving parking guests a professional response when they need help. It has certainly allowed me to focus on what I love doing most.”

Fast forward two years, and the sentiment hasn't changed...

“Parker Technology’s customer service representatives always greet our customers with great attitudes and smiling faces. The advantage of partnering with Parker has been the level of customer service they provide. Parker’s customer service professionals represent our brand as if they were Park-Rite employees every time a customer enters or exits one of our parking facilities, and our customers remember and appreciate that experience.”

Nick Aubrey, Managing Partner at Park-Rite

“Parker’s consistency and service is second to none,” continued Aubrey. “I wouldn’t want to open another automated parking garage without them.”



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