

The Parking Professional

THE INTERNATIONAL PARKING INSTITUTE

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JUNE 2017



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IPI'S AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

A garage becomes a gathering space thanks to a unique breezeway at the West Hollywood Automated Garage.

Ideas Fest

Promoting Positive Perceptions of Parking

By Helen Sullivan,
APR, Fellow PRSA

An underground lot that's a neighborhood gathering spot? Parking tickets that become Pop Tarts and peanut butter for kids who don't have enough food? A program that gets downtown workers to park remotely with a smile? They're all realities and winners of IPI's 2017 *Parking Matters*® Marketing and Communications Awards.

"Our 2017 winners set out to achieve very different goals, from improving the efficiency of parking to fighting cancer, but they all demonstrated outside-the-box thinking and a long-term commitment to their customers and communities," says IPI CEO Shawn D. Conrad, CAE. "They overcame obstacles along the way but ultimately succeeded in moving the needle. Together, they show that the parking industry does much more than park cars—it serves people and continually looks for ways to make a difference."

Three of the 13 winners received Best of 2017 awards for their marketing programs. →



**2017 Parking Matters®
Marketing and
Communications
Awards highlight
best practices
and innovative
strategies.**

BEST OF 2017 AWARDS

EASYPARK LOT 19, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Other than functioning as a thoroughfare for office workers, tourists, and commuters, the public plaza above EasyPark's underground Lot 19 at the corner of West Hastings and Hornby streets in Vancouver didn't get much respect—until the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) and EasyPark decided to give it some TLC. Thanks to new landscaping, brightly colored tables and chairs, and an exciting activation program, the space was transformed into The Perch, a center for buskers and music performers, Pokémon stations, mini lending libraries, lunchtime yoga classes, drum circles, art installations, and theater performances. It hosts Easy Park's staff summer barbecue, Simon Fraser University's annual summer City Conversations program, and informal boardroom sessions for several local businesses.

Hastings West's newly termed "little park with a big personality" has since seen traffic more than double at midday, with 73 percent more people stopping to linger (especially at lunch) and 44 percent more transiting (a survey showed 133,093 people passing through in one month with a daily average of about 4,500). It has become so popular that the DVBIA is working to duplicate its success in other areas of Vancouver.

Takeaway: *With a little love and care, cities can radically transform underutilized public space into a beckoning hub of activity and relaxation.*

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

In 2016, Texas A&M University Transportation Services embarked on a multi-year campaign to improve bike and pedestrian safety, starting with the renovation of a parking lot egress in an area known for its high volume of pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle traffic. The effort included construction of an adjacent, Dutch-style junction that featured the nation's first green solar luminescent (glow-in-the-dark) protected bike pathways, designed to store solar energy by day and increase visibility at night; it was the first glow-in-the-dark paint to receive Federal Highway Administration approval.



To introduce the innovative paint and promote proper use of the junction, the Transportation Services Marketing & Communications team executed a far-reaching marketing campaign that gained national and international media coverage and stimulated unprecedented social media activity. With a small budget, the team relied on creative resources, using its website and cost-effective design elements such as electronic infographics, interactive marketing clings, digital advertising, an online and printed FAQ page, and social media to maximize coverage and expand reach. Google Analytics revealed more than 24,000 page views augmented by 6,900 shares on Facebook and national and international media interest, including pick-up by a Netherlands Reddit forum and metro-area public transportation blogs.

Takeaway: Efforts to promote safety at a college campus can be greatly enhanced using social media and other inexpensive communication tools.

PARKHOUSTON, HOUSTON, TEXAS

When it comes to technology, what was considered cutting-edge 10 years ago is likely due for an update. The city of Houston's decade-old, 1,054 smart pay stations were no longer performing efficiently, plagued by long processing times, paper jams, bad batteries, and other

issues. New pay stations installed in early 2016 feature pay-by-plate, extend-by-phone, improved battery performance, faster transaction times, and paper jam sensors.

To promote the new pay-by-plate feature, ParkHouston developed a "What's on Your Plate" information card with a detachable key tag that features a place to write license plate numbers. Parking ambassadors wearing white shirts provided customer assistance. The pay stations were equipped with eye-level decals showing operating hours, time limits, payment methods, and a number to call for service.

The effort engaged all team members, with staff members training each other and providing special training for city council members, hearing officers, and 311 call center representatives. The marketing effort included outreach at monthly

civic club meetings, town halls, and community fairs. Compliance proved easy with reliable equipment and current technology—and meter revenue quickly increased. The investment yielded a 29 percent increase in meter revenue, a 25 percent increase in meter transactions, and a 9 percent decrease in expired meter citations.

Takeaway: When new technology is deployed, it is critical to educate and involve all staff members to ensure ownership of the message. Compliance soon follows.

ADDITIONAL WINNERS

ACE PARKING'S NATIONAL PARK FOR PINK CAMPAIGN



As he watched family members and employees struggle with cancer, Ace Parking's third-generation Owner and Managing Partner Keith B. Jones realized his company could become a catalyst for positive change. This was the genesis for Park for Pink, an annual campaign to raise awareness and generate funds to aid research toward finding a cure for cancer and help those struggling with the disease. In 2016, Ace Parking partnered with one of its health care clients to assist oncologists, helping purchase a state-of-the-art, da Vinci Xi robotic surgical system that will enable doctors to perform minimally invasive, complex surgeries. This device has been demonstrated to yield effective, positive outcomes for patients with operable cancers, and its use is cost-effective for patients.

"Because so many are either directly or indirectly impacted by this disease, I am privileged to use Ace Parking as a platform from which to support those who are suffering from it, as well as those who treat cancer patients and to assist those who will one day find a cure," Jones says. "We see the people, not the cars."

Takeaway: When parking companies undertake individual public-service initiatives, they can have a significant beneficial effect.





POP TARTS FOR TICKETS, LUBBOCK, TEXAS

After seeing the success of its annual Toys for Tickets and other citation-dismissal programs, Texas Tech University Transportation and Parking Services (TPS) decided to incorporate the concept year-round to create campus awareness of community needs and demonstrate the department's commitment to public service. The Junior League of Lubbock's Food2Kids program proved just the ticket. Every Friday afternoon during the school year, sacks of kid-friendly food are handed out to give a growing number of hungry elementary school children sustenance during the weekend, when they have no access to school breakfasts or lunches. Finding Pop Tarts in the sack is a big treat and helps students feel like their more-advantaged peers.

Competition with numerous back-to-school promotions and programs provided additional challenges, but the marketing program became a team effort: A local bakery donated Pop Tarts topped with the program name in icing, and TPS created a postcard-sized graphic and shared it with 81,560 people via Facebook and Twitter. TPS's ePermit management software queried students and employees with eligible citations, letting them know about the program and the benevolent opportunity for dismissal. Media attention provided the needed fuel. TPS dismissed 73 citations valued at \$1,519—enough to provide 3,402 sleeves of Pop Tarts, or three weeks of Friday treats. The program cost less than \$8 for the boxes of Pop Tarts used for artwork, but the payoff was big: TPS gained new community and campus allies, generated positive media attention, and helped feed 1,200 hungry children in the community.

Takeaway: *Enforcement is necessary, but a little creativity can convert citations into a community service project that generates goodwill and much more.*

PASSPORT'S MOBILE PAY PARKING BUYER'S GUIDE

Choosing a provider for mobile pay parking technology can be daunting for municipalities and government agencies, requiring detailed research, competitor comparisons, and a thorough evaluation of one's own needs and wants. Requests for proposals (RFP) are often mandatory, but cities and agencies don't always know what to ask service providers or what they need in a new service despite its potential effect on the entire parking operation.

Passport created the "Mobile Pay Parking Buyer's Guide" e-book in 2016 to help cities, agencies, and parking operators determine what to ask and know before selecting a mobile-pay parking provider. Written and designed by Passport's marketing team in collaboration with the RFP team and other departments, the easy-to-read guide covers requirements, cost, use, and pricing and serves as a successful best-practice piece to educate members of the parking industry. Promoted on all Passport social media channels, it has garnered more than 4,000 impressions and has proved successful in helping cities, agencies, and operators tackle the buying process for a mobile-pay parking solution.



Takeaway: *A digestible guide can make it much easier for decision-makers to ask the right questions and make informed buying decisions.*

MAWAQIF PARKING PROGRAM, ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

One of the key missions of the Abu Dhabi Parking Division (MAWAQif) of the Department of Municipal Affairs and Transport's (DMAT) comprehensive and

CLEVER SHIFT... SMART FUTURE



PAY FROM ANYWHERE WITH YOUR MOBILE PHONE

Send an SMS to 3009 as follows:
"Vehicle Plate Colour & Category<Space> Plate Number <Space>
Parking Type (Standard or Premium "S or P") <Space>
Duration in Hours" E.g., RED16 99698 S 1

FOR NON ABU DHABI PLATES, CREATE AN ACCOUNT ON (m-MAWAQIF)

Send an SMS to 3009 as follows:
Nickname<Space>Parking Type (Standard or Premium
"S or P")<Space> Duration in Hours" E.g., MyPatrol S 3

www.mawaqif.ae | 800 3009

admawaqif

integrated parking program is to ensure a greener, more accessible, safer, and less congested city—ultimately improving the quality of life for its residents and visitors. The Emirate's 2030 Plan seeks to make Abu Dhabi one of the leading world capitals in mobility, connectivity, safety, and transport, with focus on safeguarding the environment. The communication campaign focused on smart parking payment options and raising awareness of safety in responsible parking.

Starting with a review of a customer satisfaction survey and international case studies, MAWAQIF produced educational materials to educate the public about parking laws, regulations, violations, and enforcement, reinforcing MAWAQIF's brand identity and mandates. Posters, video, TV advertising, a website, and other communication vehicles in both Arabic and English focused on smart parking solutions and safety. The successful campaign reduced parking-related road incident injuries by 21 percent and produced a noticeable shift to smarter and more convenient payment solutions. It also raised customer satisfaction to 87 percent and regulation compliance to 98 percent.

Takeaway: Plan for short- to long-term marketing and communication campaigns by establishing goals, objectives, audience, tools, and anticipated results.

EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA

With passenger numbers down, jetSet Parking realized that acquiring a new customer segment was its only chance of growing or maintaining revenues. To increase overall market share, the company needed to change parkers its competition into customers by highlighting the company's advantages over its competitors. The PROMISE campaign challenged passengers to find a better airport parking deal during spring break, offering to beat any other offer that came close. It pledged a 25 percent discount on its daily rate with no hidden taxes or fuel surcharges. Through geo-targeted radio, television, online advertising, social media ads, and two in-airport displays, the jetSet PROMISE campaign penetrated the airport parking market.

The four-week campaign proved successful: Online bookings rose 10 percent, and revenue increased 1 percent even though passenger counts were down by 7 percent—yielding a more than 200 percent return on advertising investment through online bookings alone. After the media campaign concluded, jetSet extended the promotion code to encourage further bookings

If you don't park
with jetSet,
you'll pay too much.

Park for less.
As low as \$5.90 a day!

Use Promo Code:

PROMISE

#pinkypromise

Book online before March 20, 2016.

for two more weeks, bringing in 300 additional online bookings (a 210 percent return). Fueled by this increase, the airport decided to extend the media-supported campaign into the summer, bumping its ROI to more than 400 percent and generating a four-time return on its media investment. Print, online, and webpage graphics were produced internally, and vehicle displays were fabricated through existing partnerships so the only outside costs were \$76,000 for radio and television buys and production.

Takeaway: *Adopting new positioning that mirrors competitors' pricing, when supported by a catchy advertising campaign, can net a significant return on investment.*

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO CAMPUS SERVICES, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

In its ongoing quest for new ways to educate 29,000 students and 4,000 faculty members about parking, University of Texas at San Antonio Campus Services has successfully and significantly decreased the revenue earned from citation fees. Its peanut butter parking campaign, inspired by an initiative at the University of Alaska Anchorage, proved to be an easy way to spread the word, accomplishing the joint mission of educating students about parking rules and regulations and feeding the hungry.

staffs built a towering display and educated each donor about how to avoid future infractions. Outreach to local media produced coverage on TV, radio, websites, and blogs, as well as national recognition in *College Services* magazine. The campaigns collected nearly 1,500 pounds of peanut butter, saved \$10,000 saved in citation fees, and provided countless meals to the local community.

Takeaway: *A fun event can advance community involvement, promote campus engagement, and educate people about parking.*

EASYPARK, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

How to & Rules:

1. Fill out & submit 2 forms: a Parking Agreement form and a Parking Agreement Employees Discount Verification form.
2. Only allowed to park on the 5th floor or higher if using a garage permit. Failure to do so will disqualify you.
3. You are not leasing a space, but securing access to the facility/lot/zone during enforcement hours. Spaces are not guaranteed.
4. All sales are final at time of purchase regardless of use, including a one-time \$20 application fee.
5. To qualify, new employees must supply their most recent paystub, while existing employees must supply their 2 most recent paystubs. Photocopies not accepted. Sensitive information may be redacted.
6. A copy of your current employee issued work schedule is also required.

**Call
276-PARK
to apply**

**Downtown
Employee
Parking
Program**

Apply for 70% off parking if you work downtown!



For one week at the start of the fall 2015 and 2016 semesters, \$100 and \$50 permit violations were payable with 80 and 40 oz. jars of peanut butter, respectively. The campaign followed a week of warning cards issued by the enforcement team and was supported by social media (including animated GIFs and video updates on Snapchat), signs in high-traffic locations, a webpage, elevator posters, flyers, and a bookmark in the citation envelope on each vehicle. As the number of peanut butter jars multiplied, the marketing and customer service

EasyPark's pilot Downtown Employee Parking Program was created to encourage workers' use of inexpensive parking permits for off-street parking locations in downtown Anchorage and maximize street parking for visitors. Through a collaboration with the Anchorage 5th Avenue Mall, the program initially offered discounted parking to part-time and low-wage hourly employees but expanded the 70 percent parking discount to all downtown workers at 11 EasyPark lots and garages.

To encourage workers' use of parking permits, EasyPark made personal visits to mall shopkeepers and downtown businesses. The decision to charge at street meters on Saturday initially met with some political pushback and was temporarily halted by the mayor until more data was collected to support it. The meter charge was adjusted to offer the first hour of Saturday mall parking for free. Overall, the creative parking programs have enhanced economic growth in downtown Anchorage. They have been embraced by workers, who can park without worrying about time restrictions and hunting for open spaces on the street, and downtown shoppers who appreciate the increased availability of street parking.

Takeaway: *With personal outreach, research and data collection, and the flexibility to make adjustments as needed, parking challenges can become opportunities.*

ANCHORAGE DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP, LTD. AND EASYPARK, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Anchorage Downtown Partnership, Ltd. and EasyPark combined forces to launch Safety First, a strategic approach to improve public safety and maximize the security resources in downtown Anchorage. The campaign

featured a number to call or text to get assistance or report suspicious behavior, panhandling, public drinking/inebriates, and suspected drug dealing or use, as well as to report graffiti and the need for trash removal or sidewalk cleaning. The effort enhances EasyPark's existing 24/7 security dispatch line, with Anchorage Downtown Partnership, Ltd.'s Security Ambassadors providing an extra set of eyes and ears for residents. The combined effort has increased both safety coverage and response time.

With the help of a public relations representative, outreach to downtown businesses included window clings and communication to their staff, family, and friends. Covenant House, a social service provider and program partner, adjust-

ed its staff hours so representatives could accompany security ambassadors on welfare checks and provided additional services. Rollout was initially directed to large groups for maximum effect, then supported with consistent messaging from both agencies about website information and phone number changes.

Takeaway: *When a community organization and a parking company join forces, a city's residents can benefit from increased public safety and services.*

MIAMI PARKING AUTHORITY (MPA), MIAMI, FLA.

The high school and college students attending the New World School of the Arts (NWSA) were a natural choice to create a series of murals to be unveiled following Art Basel 2016. The school is located a block from the offices of the Miami Parking Authority, and the green space next to MPA's Courthouse Garage is a lunchtime mecca for the young artists. The project was designed to accomplish several missions: to encourage and support talented local artists; provide a semester-long project, create and grow an art-in-public-space program in MPA facilities, foster a partnership with the school, and spark an interest in art in public spaces. MPA offered a small stipend to support the young artists' education and covered the cost of materials.

The assignment was to create two murals in the Courthouse Garage depicting Miami's evolution and

transformation. The murals had to be transcendent, extending beyond the limits of ordinary experience, and transient, reflecting the movement of people to and from Miami during the last 50 years. They also had to portray the landscape's diversity, contrasting the Everglades' natural beauty with Miami's urban sophistication. The 13 students worked daily through the fall semester to design a harmonious concept that incorporated their diverse talents and skills. They were allowed to modify elements along the way provided they were in keeping with the overall concept. The resulting murals expressed the students' collective vision: one mural organic in nature, the other industrial. The project proved to be a win-win for the students, the city, and the MPA.



Please join us for a mural unveiling
Created by New World School of the Arts in partnership with Miami Parking Authority

MIAMI PARKING AUTHORITY

Tuesday, November 29 | 11:30am - 1pm
Courthouse Garage | 40 NW Third Street | Miami

Ceremony will commence promptly at 11:30am with introductions followed by a description of the concept by NWSA students. Following the short ceremony, there will be a reception in the offices of MPA. Light lunch and refreshments will be served.

Takeaway: *Reaching out to students to create public art helps support young artists and beautifies a parking garage for the enjoyment of everyone.*

The Parking Matters® Marketing & Communications awards program will accept 2018 entries Nov. 15—Dec. 31, 2017.



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