## CASE STUDY

# WHEN IT COMES TO PARKING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON, CUSTOMER SERVICE IS PARAMOUNT

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**

*Founded in 1927, the University of Houston is the flagship institution of the University of Houston System and, with over 47,000 students, it's the third-largest university in Texas. Located in the sprawling metropolis of Houston, the University provides cutting-edge programs including undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, distance, and continuing education studies. Ranked among the best colleges in the United States, UH is home to award-winning faculty, innovative research centers, alumni have become international leaders, and a diverse student population. UH is also well known for athletics, having won 17 NCAA team national championships.*

# ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

For a school with such a robust academic, artistic, and athletic life, parking is an important campus resource. Technology plays a huge role in the success of the University's parking program, with advanced PARCS systems getting students, faculty, staff, and visitors in and out of parking garages quickly and easily, and parking guidance technology guiding drivers directly to available parking.

UH's parking technology package is extraordinarily advanced. But as every university parking administrator knows, technology doesn't always work as it's supposed to. Parts break and things go wrong. Also, drivers sometimes have trouble operating technology, even when it is working properly. There's nothing more frustrating than sitting helplessly at a gate that won't open when you are late for class or trying to get out of the garage to get to an after school job on time.

# ELEVATING THE PARKING EXPERIENCE

That's where Parker Technology comes in. The University recently partnered with us to provide 24/7 customer support in campus parking facilities. Customer support is offered via Parker's one-of-kind customer service platform, which provides a direct video (or audio) link to a highly trained customer service representatives if a driver experiences problems when entering, exiting, or paying for parking.

Parker Technology works in tandem with UH's existing T2 PARCS equipment, providing instant access to trained customer services professionals via buttons located in the entry, exit and pay-on-foot kiosks. The University has six garages utilizing Parker's two-way video functionality, while 16 lots have audio functionality. Across the 22 facilities, Parker's solution is available in 111 lanes.

> **"Partnering with Parker Technology is all about elevating the parking experience. It's also going to help us streamline our own parking operations, which will significantly reduce our parking management costs."**
>
> **- Neil Hart, Executive Director of Parking & Transportation Services**

# A HUMAN CONNECTION

In today's increasingly automated parking industry, Parker's customer support platform can provide the sole connection between parkers and trained professionals who can help solve common problems related to paying for parking or entering and exiting garages. Each year, parkers across the United States reach out to customer service professionals via intercoms at least 85 million times.

"As important as this technology is as a customer service amenity, it's also playing an important role in our long-term management plans," said Hart.

As stated earlier, the technology is helping to streamline parking operations by inserting a vital safeguard into the University's automated parking management system. It provides additional operational benefits by collecting valuable customer service data. Data is the backbone of contemporary parking management, and that data is collected by the wide array of technologies employed in parking facilities.

For instance, PARCS equipment tells owners and operators how many parkers use a given facility, and when peak hours and days tend to occur. Parking guidance equipment collects data about which sections of the parking facility are busiest and when. This is invaluable information for helping parking administrators manage their parking resources and determine whether they need additional parking.

But as important as this information is, it doesn't tell owners and operators anything about how well the facility is operating. Are parkers able to enter facilities quickly and conveniently? Are they able to pay and exit quickly? When there are problems are they caused by equipment malfunction or user error? If malfunction, which equipment experiences the most issues and what are those issues? Parker's software platform collects and analyzes all this information and makes it available to parking administrators.

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From this data, university parking administrators can draw conclusions about how their parking technology is performing and whether maintenance or replacement is called for.



**"We have an employee who looks at the Parker Platform every day. From that, we can see what issues arose. We can also see who didn't have money to pay for parking, so then we can bill them. Parker helps us understand exactly what went on during any given day." said Neil Hart, Executive Director of Parking and Transportation Services**

# MORE CONVENIENT + MANAGEABLE PARKING

"Adding Parker's platform was an essential step to successfully automating our parking," said Hart. "Since we automated, parking revenue has jumped by 23%. So, I'd say it has been a good investment."

With the addition of Parker Technology's solution, parking at the University of Houston is more convenient than ever before. The parking system is also more manageable. The University of Houston's addition of Parker puts it at the forefront of university parking operations, and UH's parking customer service program should serve as a model for other universities across the United States.

**"THANK YOU FOR PARKING WITH UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?"**

## Parker Technology

LEARN MORE AT **WWW.PARKERTECHNOLOGY.COM**