Ticketing & Receipting

Mobile Parking Enforcement

Gone are the old handwritten tickets that took 2-3 minutes to write out, and in their place, new highly legible, standardised tickets printed in 2-3 seconds

Increased revenue through faster payment and fewer unenforceable tickets

One city reduced their back office staff count from four to ONE

Solution technology...

Cameo 3 / QL320™ or QL420™ mobile printer with Bluetooth option

Portable Hand-Held Computer with Bluetooth connectivity

Possible GPRS linkage to ticket database

Parking tickets made easier – *sorry!*

Looks can be deceiving, at least when it comes to issuing parking tickets. Despite the public view that traffic officers enjoy writing tickets the truth is actually the opposite.

The process of issuing a parking ticket is very manual, time consuming and often unenforcable as others struggle to read the handwriting of the issuing officer. However, this is set to change with the adoption of new mobile technologies by both public and private parking organisations.

The 'Ticketing Challenge' – real business issues demanding a real solution

Everyone is familiar with, or may have experienced first-hand, the picture of a parking ticket being placed on a car found to be illegally parked. What is less appreciated, is the back office system that is required to support this function. Once the tickets have been issued, the officer submits his copies at the end of the shift so that they can be entered into the system. This will typically involve someone reading the handwritten copies and manually entering them into the central database.

This process is not only labour intensive but also problems such as being unable to read someone's handwriting as well as the arrival of large volumes of tickets can mean that it often takes 2-3days before the tickets are fully entered on the system. Until they are on the system, payment cannot be accepted, which means that the local government does not receive the revenue as quickly as it might.

By automating the ticket issuing system, using a Zebra mobile printer in conjunction with a hand-held PDA, the solution is simple. The officer uses a stylus to select from simple drop-down menus or enters information via a keyboard. The ticket generated is then automatically printed out on the Zebra printer. Gone are the old handwritten tickets that took 2-3 minutes to write out, and in their place, new highly legible, standardised tickets printed in 2-3 seconds.

Once the ticket has been generated there are two options in uploading this information. You can:

- Batch download issued tickets information at the end of each shift for immediate entry onto the database *OR*
- Use a GRPS wireless two-way connection to have real-time access to the database

Either way, you have accurate, 'real-time' information.

One city which recently installed such a system saw not only benefits from the reduction in unenforceable tickets and the increased revenue due to faster ticket payment, but in addition to this, they were able to reduce their back-office staff count to one (from four) to manage the system.

Additional benefits…

There is more to managing city parking than issuing parking tickets. Parking permits have to be checked, meters have to be validated, cars have to be towed away and police must be informed if a stolen car is located. Under the old system, where the parking officer worked in isolation, it was often difficult, if not impossible for these other tasks to be carried out properly. By equipping the officer with a PDA, he has all he need to carry out these functions speedily and efficiently.

Parking permits can now be checked

Parking permits can now be checked to ensure that they are not only valid for the area but also that the car that they are being displayed on actually matches the car on file. This can reduce lost revenue through the fraudulent use of permits.

Police alerted to stolen vehicles

When an officer enters a vehicle registration number, it will automatically be checked against the police stolen car database. If the vehicle is stolen the police can be immediately alerted and informed of its exact location.

Frequent non-payers get towed away

Increase in the rate that initial fines are now being paid

If the vehicle registration shows a number of unpaid fines, the officer can also make arrangements to have the car towed away, so as to reduce the risk of unpaid fines going unchallenged. One city saw an almost immediate increase in court case revenue through the efficiencies that this system brought to the managing of unpaid fines. This also acts as a deterrent and the same city has since seen an increase in the rate that initial fines are now being paid.

'Courtesy Cancellations' can also be monitored. If the officer lets someone off from a fine—for example they may have broken down—this will be logged in the system. However, if someone is repeatedly using the same excuse to escape from paying a fine, this is easily visible —there is no escaping that fine!

Safety first

While we have seen that the mobile ticketing system can impact the efficiency and revenue generated from parking enforcement, it can also improve the safety of the parking officers who are using it.

If the GRPS option is utilised, it not only gives real-time connectivity but it can also allow you to track the location of your officer. You can have visibility of where they are at all times.

Issuing parking tickets is not the most popular occupation and often the officers are faced with abusive vehicle owners. Instances like this can be logged against the vehicle registration highlighting to any other officers that there may be a risk of abuse. This gives them the chance to approach the situation better prepared or to avoid any confrontation by electronically issuing the ticket rather than placing it on the car.

The future of parking enforcement

It is clear that the use of a Zebra mobile printer wirelessly connected to a PDA can radically change the world of parking enforcement.

Whilst the key benefit is undoubtedly that local councils can **enforce parking controls more efficiently** whilst also **increasing the revenue** generated from parking, the adoption of these technologies is also changing the image of the parking officer forever.

By giving officers access to a library of information, they can be **more effective** in their jobs. One city, in addition to their parking ticketing function, is even looking to use the Zebra printer / PDA with GPRS connection to allow the traffic officer also to act as a tourist guide, printing directions to local attractions on their printer.

For further information on Zebra products or to find a local supplier, visit the Zebra website or contact us at:

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