



Parking professionals predict the future

IN 50 YE



ARS

If you were cool 50 years ago, you likely pined after *Motor Trend* magazine's car of the year—a shiny Buick Special with a newfangled V6 engine they declared almost indistinguishable from everybody else's V8. Your jaw hit the floor when grainy video of Marilyn Monroe crooning "Happy Birthday" to President John Kennedy hit the airwaves (and again when she died of a drug overdose later that year), and you mourned the loss of Cuban cigars when trade between that country and the U.S. was banned. Arkansas residents shopped in the first Wal-Mart store, John Steinbeck won the Nobel Prize for literature, and Pope John XXIII was *Time* magazine's Man of the Year (which was still officially called "man" of the year).



1962 was the year John Glenn orbited earth a stunning three times, only to be bested by a U.S.S.R. crew several months later. The Vietnam conflict was starting to rumble through Asia, and the U.K.'s *Sunday Times* became the world's first newspaper to print a color supplement. Twelve East Germans escaped their country by tunneling under the Berlin Wall, a new band called the Rolling Stones debuted at London's Marquee Club, and another upstart group released their first single under the moniker of The Beatles. Finally, it was the year that a group of parking professionals officially established themselves as the Institutional and Municipal Parking Congress.

How times change.

Wondering what the future will be like is something people have done forever, and IPI members are no different. As IPI celebrates its 50th anniversary, we asked a few what they thought the parking profession might be like in another five decades, and we heard an earful! Their answers—some serious and some not so much—are presented here.

Kim E. Jackson
Director,
Transportation
and Parking
Services
Princeton
University



We will be the Inter Galactic Parking Agency (IGPA). Vehicles will be akin to the Jetson mobiles and either fly or just hover. They will plug into sleek, slick looking charging units where they are serviced and cleaned. These vehicle will operate by voice command that allow drivers to multitask while being transported to and fro. The IGPA will be a global organization dedicated to keeping travel safe, secure, and simple.

Jon Martens
Parking
Consultant
Walker
Parking



In 50 years, parking will be much different. We'll see increased automation of facilities, wireless recharging of electronic vehicle batteries, and access and payments that are done automatically through devices installed on each vehicle or maybe through chips implanted on the user (I hope not).

Frank L. Giles
Parking
Manager
Georgia
International
Convention
Center



In 50 years I envision the reign of zero emissions vehicles which may allow cars to park inside of mixed-use parking structures beyond what we have today. We could have office buildings in which drivers pull right into the lobby, leave their cars in a revolving door-type structure, and walk 10 feet over to the elevator. Cars may even compact themselves to a smaller size once they have been exited.

'Bunmi Omitoyin
Operations Manager
InterPark LLC

I see parking going to full automation in the next 50 years. Technology will take over from humans and that will be fun. For any of us in the industry to be relevant in the next 50 years, we have to re-engineer ourselves by acquiring training that will make us relevant in the industry. This is the area that IPI will have to focus on in seminars, webinars, and conferences. The certification program will also have to be geared to the need of parking professionals in the next century. Right now, in the commercial sector of the industry, which is where I am operating, we have drastically reduced the human element and promoted the use of technology. I have eliminated over 20 percent of my labor force with the introduction of a remote monitoring center, which is especially important in light of the current economic situation. Because the cost of operation is not going down and government regulations and taxes have been going up, the only element that we can control is payroll, hence the use of technology that pays off in the long run. IPI needs to be conscious of this and put together programs that will help those who intend to remain in the industry for a long time.

Richard Racey, LC, MIES
National
Sales
Manager
Beacon
Products



I think in the future, you will see lighting innovations in the area of efficiency, reduced glare, and more features such as onboard occupancy sensors (already available) and onboard IP cameras for security (already working on). We'll have more smarter lighting that allows building operators to control the lights when needed, maximize cost effectiveness, and give them features that will add value.

Sue Olley
**Parking
Director**
City of Rochester



When I started in parking, we literally worked out of aprons or shoe boxes with time clocks. All computer reports were generated from IBM punch cards. It's amazing to see how far we've come.

Over the next 50 years, I see a huge push for even more cashless parking systems. At least in the beginning, cell phones and apps will play a large role in that evolution. I also see the increase in alternative fuel vehicles. I'm not sure if they will be electric, hydro, or atomic, but I see a decrease in the dependence on fossil fuels. This may bring a whole group of new issues to the parking industry.

I believe we will always be parking some types of vehicles, but as we are able to do more and more from our electronic devices in our homes, the demand may actually decrease. I also believe that the single- or double-occupancy commuter car will become more popular, thereby decreasing the size and increasing the number of parking spaces per lot or garage. We will need to address our older infrastructures and facilities. It would be nice if someone invented a corrosion-free material for us to replace concrete or make it corrosion free.

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Jason Dunster
Director of Operations
Walker Parking Consultants



I think the big leap in parking planning will be a more comprehensive "smart" net of parking. Much of parking sits used in the hope that we'll stop at the shopping mall, transit station, university, and our office. As our cars become part of our communication networks, they can direct us to available reserved stalls or direct us away from areas of higher congestion and utilization. If we are using our existing resources more efficiently, the need to build more can be reduced, by far the most sustainable solution. Small elements of this vision are available now with pay-by-cell phone applications and reserving parking spaces online, but I envision a more comprehensive, seamless network between facilities, the web, and our cars.

For example, your vehicle could track your driving habits and report the statistical likelihood that you will use the Park'n'Ride facility during the week, or the probability that you will go to the movies on Friday evening. This data aggregated across a larger geographic area could allow urban planners to develop sophisticated models to forecast demand and predict supply for various development scenarios. What if your vehicle could advise you as to the order of your destination(s) not just based on the geographic distance but also by how busy each facility at your estimated arrival time?

Raymond Humbert
Associate Director, Parking and Transit Services
Arizona State University

First blush would be Smart Grids where electric vehicles are selling back part of their stored electricity to the parking garage as they park and plug for the day. I compare this to the air conditioning of chiller towers that make ice and cold water at night when power demand is low (as are rates). They push that cold water to nearby buildings to use during the day to conserve on daytime energy. Just think about the first concept for that process and the demanding infrastructure that had to happen to make that idea a reality! A lot of infrastructure and advanced thinking is needed to make this happen. Isn't that what we as parking professionals are all about—not the status-quo but forward thinking?

Pearl Hurd
Project Manager
Houston Airport System



I think parking will be different in that robots will be parking our cars and we will have solar-powered vehicles with computer chips that have the ability to self-park. This is wonderful news in that the current level of automation will continue to grow. My biggest concern is that as an industry, we do not lose that personal touch like having a parking cashier smile and ask you to have a great day or like having a parking technician assist you with a mechanical problem with your car.

I envision huge, vertical parking decks that can fit 10,000 or more cars. Of course cars will be much, much smaller. And the deck will be entirely mechanical and automated as vehicles will be slotted in a “rack and stack” system.

Don Walter
Manager, Parking Services
University of Georgia



Mass transit (especially rail) will be the way of the future, but there will still be cars. As real estate becomes less available and more costly and as the world becomes more populated and people move to cities, I envision huge, vertical parking decks that can fit 10,000 or more cars. Of course cars will be much, much smaller. And the deck will be entirely mechanical and automated as vehicles will be slotted in a “rack and stack” system. The entire deck will be completely sustainable and powered by efficient solar panels on the roof of the deck as well as wind powered turbines on the sides of the building (or this renewable energy may come from remote solar/wind sources). The deck will also re-charge all of the vehicles parked in the deck, and they will be electric vehicles, of course!

Mark Pace
Parking and Transportation Manager
Montgomery College



In the late 70s when I got my start in the parking business, it was labor intensive and transactions were all made with cash. In 50 years, some type of technology will replace the labor in all self park environments and there will be few if any cash transactions.

Art Noriega
Chief Executive Officer
Miami Parking Authority



50 years from now the payment methodology will be entirely different. We will most certainly exist in a “virtual” world. Most likely, the vehicles themselves will directly interface with the facilities and parking locations to process payments and that most of the external equipment we use will be obsolete.