

Case Study

Real Talk With Boston Transportation Department

“In the 30 years of our partnership, I’ve never heard Conduent say ‘it can’t be done.’”

– Gina Fiandaca, Director, Office of the Parking Clerk
Boston Transportation Department



The Challenge

When most people think of Boston, they think of lobster, marathons and baseball. But, the city is also a pioneer in parking innovation—with a history of “firsts” that date back to the 1982. That was the year new legislation decriminalized parking tickets, transferring parking violation management from the court system to a newly formed Office of the Parking Clerk.

“We had an empty room, a backlog of tickets and not enough internal resources to get the job done,” explained Gina Fiandaca, director, Office of Parking Clerks for the City of Boston. “We knew we needed a reliable partner that could provide a system and back-office processing support. But, it also had to be a company that understood the challenges of municipal government and the sensitive nature of parking—and that our ultimate goal was making life easier for our constituents.”

Although 600,000 people live in Boston, another 600,000 come into the city to work, shop and see the sights each day. These volumes make proper on-street parking management and enforcement both a challenge and a necessity for economic growth. Accuracy, from the way tickets are written to the way they are processed, is critical.

When Fiandaca and other city leaders awarded this initial on-street parking contract to Conduent, Boston became one of the first cities in the nation to outsource ticket processing. Thirty-two years later, this public-private partnership is still going strong, with a track record of innovation that few cities can match.

The Solution

The solution provided Boston with the foundational elements needed to build a world-class on-street parking operation from the ground-up. Initially, Conduent supplied the personnel, parking management system and integration required to seamlessly process what were then handwritten tickets; from entering these into the system, to producing all notices, recording

of hearing dispositions and correspondence to receiving payments.

By engaging Conduent on a managed services basis, the Office of Parking Clerk not only eliminated the need for capital expenditure and increased headcount, but laid the foundation for great things to come.

“Parking is constant. You can’t buy a system and go on your way. To be successful, we have to continually make things easier for the constituents we serve—from using technological advances and innovation, to state of the art enforcement systems, to making it convenient for people to pay for their parking tickets,” Fiandaca said. “With Conduent, we have a partner in innovation. We can leverage their experience working with other city parking programs; and we can also drive the bus—asking them to take our vision and turn it into the next innovation.”

The resulting innovations have been many:

- Boston was the first city to allow individuals to pay for tickets online in real time, as well as apply for residential parking permits. These options provide anytime/anywhere convenience to consumers, while controlling operating costs.
- Boston was also one of the first to equip enforcement officers with handheld devices for ticketing. These devices eliminate paper tickets, which can get lost, and immediately transmit ticket information to the processing queue. Just as important, the handhelds alert officers if the vehicle should be booted.
- The Office is near paperless, digitizing incoming correspondence long before it was the industry norm. Everything is stored electronically and indexed for easy retrieval.



- Three newly installed kiosks enable consumers to pay tickets, remove boots and reclaim towed vehicles any time that's convenient for them. People don't have to wait until office hours to retrieve their cars, and city staff can spend more time on strategic projects and less time taking payments.

Instead of managing operations from behind their desks, supervisors now manage the City's 163 enforcement officers from the field using tablets. They can identify opportunities on the street; adjust staffing to cover a specific area and get a real-time overview of where officers are at any given time. A continual flow of up-to-date information supports improved decision-making.

One of the newest initiatives makes good use of the vast amount of data collected throughout the operation, from on-street meters and payment information to violations and disputed cases. A dedicated Conduent analytics team is applying algorithms and providing insights Fiandaca can use to optimize officer route and shift composition, as well as make recommendations regarding parking management, enforcement hours and policy.

Eventually, Fiandaca hopes to layer on new on-street payment options like 'pay by cell,' GPS-based on-street wayfaring and other innovations that continue to "take the pain out of parking"

The Results

With its focus on user convenience and innovation, it's not surprising that this dynamic 32-year partnership has delivered some significant results:

- The City of Boston has one of the highest parking ticket collection rates in the country. More than half of all tickets are paid within 21 days; 93 percent pay within 24 months.

- By improving ticket accuracy and making it easier for motorists to pay, the City and Conduent have built a "culture of compliance."
- Higher turnover means reduced congestion, more available on-street parking and reduced pollution from drivers searching aimlessly for open spaces. More available spaces in front of retailers and restaurants support local economic growth, as well.
- Web and kiosk payment options make it easier for motorists to pay their tickets and retrieve their vehicles. Today, nearly 51% of tickets are paid by web and \$178,720 in payments were received at kiosks in 2013. These adoption rates continue to increase every quarter.

Because they are working with a proven parking solution provider, the City of Boston can implement these innovations without incurring R&D costs. More importantly, it has a true partner looking out for its best interests.

"Conduent is always protective of the city, our data and our integrity," Fiandaca said. "The staff is outstanding; always willing to do what it takes to get the job done. We are true partners—I think that's evident in all we have accomplished together."

The good news is, although 32 years strong, this story is just beginning. Look for more great achievements to come.

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