



10,000 capacity venue chooses WPS to deliver cashless parking

Site Overview

Bournemouth International Centre (BIC) is a 10,000-capacity venue managed by the social enterprise, BH Live in partnership with BCP Council. It facilitates live entertainment events, conferences, and large-scale banqueting, as well as trade and consumer exhibitions, a seasonal ice rink and party nights. It is a major contributor to the local economy and supports employment for hospitality, retail and transport.

As one of the UK's major tourist destinations, Bournemouth attracts millions of visitors every year, particularly in the summer months, making the BIC an important venue. It is therefore vital that its 644 parking spaces are managed by a user-friendly and reliable parking system

The challenge

"Parking forms an integral part of our business and the visitor experience," says Rob Noverraz, Operations Manager for BH Live. "Not only in the revenue it generates, but also in the convenience our customers expect and need."

The primary challenge was that for large-scale events most guests arrive and leave at the same time, so the parking system needed to mitigate issues around queuing at pay stations and avoid bottle necks that could lead to congestion.

It was also important that a best-in-class customer experience was delivered.

The venue wanted to move away from pay & display to a cashless parking system. "It was a bold choice to go cashless at the time, but we stand by it," says Rob. "It eliminates the risks and costs of collecting and banking cash, and stops the machines being a target for theft. It has also removed any complications for customers who don't carry cash anymore, or find it a challenge to use 'pay by mobile'-only apps."



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Solutions and benefits

Following a competitive tender process, BIC turned to WPS, one of the UK's leading parking equipment manufacturers.

WPS' sophisticated ParkAdvance™ pay on foot system, supported by highly-reliable automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology, was chosen to provide customer convenience and an easy-to-use service, with users paying at one of five pay stations or at the entry and exit barriers prior to exit.

Traffic lanes were widened, and the dual carriageway into the car park was realigned by moving a central island to enhance speed of traffic flows. Two fixed exit lanes, one fixed entrance and one 'tidal' lane, controlled by a traffic light system, feeds users into and out of the car park. The tidal lane can be switched from entry to exit depending on the time of day and traffic flows. A variable message sign (VMS) positioned on the roundabout used to enter the car park informs users on number and location of spaces. ANPR technology supports the system by recognising car registration plates linked to paid tickets, and automatically opens exit barriers. The result is that traffic is kept moving even the busiest times of day.

"WPS won the tender process for a number of reasons including equipment that has a user-friendly feel," explains Rob. "They were also keen to understand our site's unique challenges rather than applying a standard approach."

Whereas the venue had previously operated a pay & display parking system, Rob says opting for pay on foot has been well received:

"Most people enjoy the convenience of this new system. And while there are some people who need extra support, we can use the intercom to speak and assist. This isn't something we could do before."

Rob concludes that as a busy, multi-use site the system works well to accommodate a variety of different needs: "Parking is often the first impression our customers have and so it's important we get it right. If we make it as easy as possible for visitors to get here, they can then focus on the reason they're with us – which is ultimately to have a great time."