# WMATA Success Story

## Getting Out of the Car and Onto the Train

> *"Any technology that helps students find parking is a great thing. We've been looking for a way to make life easier for a while."*
>
> **Suzzanne Bronski, Director of media relations at MSU.**

### Highlights

- WMATA wanted to make it easier for motorists to get parked and ride the train
- Provided Parker to guide drivers to park and ride lots with real-time availability
- Implemented mobile payments as an alternative to coin-operated meters
- Gained valuable insights into meter operations and collections using Meter Monitors

### About WMATA

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is Washington D.C.'s metro rail system, and is the second-busiest rapid transit system in the U.S. with a daily ridership of nearly 900,000 trips. A number of Kiss & Ride lots provide parking for commuters who wish to take the train into the City.

### Challenges

1. **Overflowing Demand:** several of WMATA's lots fill up during the day, making it difficult for some drivers to conveniently onboard the train from nearby roads or freeways.
2. **Lack of Information:** Drivers had no way of knowing which lots were full until they arrived. It was difficult to know when the lots would fill up, leaving commuters guessing as to when they should arrive to find a space.
3. **Inconvenient Payment Methods:** Coin-operated parking meters collected payments from commuters. This means they could spend too much time searching for coins, and even miss their train.
4. **Coin-Operated Parking Meters:** These parking meters were not wirelessly enabled to return any data on meter status. Buying new meters would require a large investment.

## Solution

WMATA uses Streetline's sensors in several of its busiest parking lots, providing occupancy data for the spaces. Other aspects of WMATA's solution include:

- **Parker™** – the real-time parking guidance app for smartphones
- **Meter Monitor™** – a wireless upgrade for single-space meters that enables meter maintenance and collections applications for improved operations.
- **Mobile Payments** – commuters can pay for parking using a mobile phone (via a 3rd party mobile payment provider)
- **Web Parking Status** – WMATA publishes occupancy information on its website in real time and provides average trends – showing riders when they should arrive by to find an open space
- **Meter Collections and Maintenance applications** – with the sensing and wireless communications provided by Meter Monitors, Streetline offered applications that remotely sense and alert WMATA when the meter is full or needs repair

## Profile

Daily Ridership: 900,000 – Second largest in the U.S.

Imagine a world where parking is easy. Where drivers can find a spot, traffic jams are a thing of the past, the air is clean, and people move about easily. A place where residents and visitors enjoy all that the city or campus has to offer without worrying about finding a parking space. Today, 30% of traffic in a community is caused by drivers looking for parking. This results in wasted fuel, excess carbon emissions, driver frustration, and a drag on the local economy. The costs of inefficiently used parking will only increase with urban population growth.


## Results

**Parking Guidance:** Parker now guides commuters to lots that have availability in real time, eliminating the need to search for available lots. Commuters are also able to check WMATA's website for average occupancy rates during the day, and know what time they should arrive by to get a space.

**Advanced Services Without the High Price Tag:** WMATA did not need to pay the high price of completely replacing its meters, and was able to offer both parking guidance and mobile payments to commuters for a smoother, more convenient experience.

**Complete Mobile Guidance and Payment Experience:** Parking guidance and mobile payments could both be done within Parker, and Meter Monitors enabled mobile payments to be pushed to the meter display, so commuters could see payment information on the phone as well as the meter.

**Conveniences Make It Easier to Park and Ride:** By offering guidance and mobile payments, WMATA has made it easier for drivers to get out of their cars and onto the trains, creating a more effective transportation ecosystem.

**Smarter Meter Operations:** Using Meter Monitors, WMATA was able to implement meter collections and maintenance applications without the high cost of replacing the meters completely. This helped the agency to improve operations and maintenance, resulting in more available meter hours and potential revenue.

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