

# Parking Attendant Kiosks

In a world of automated parking systems, it's still nice, and not uncommon, to be greeted at a parking lot entrance or exit by the smiling face of a parking attendant. Attendants can provide visitors with a sense of welcome - their attitude reflecting that of the organization they are representing. The appearance of the attendants' workplace, the parking kiosk, can also reflect your corporate image or branding, setting that important "first impression" for the incoming public. The layout and comfort of the workplace can also influence the attendant's ability to provide appropriate service levels.

When the need arises, this editorial can serve as a guide to help you find the right workplace solutions. Although circumstances that drive the need for attendant kiosks can vary significantly, there is a basic five-step process you can follow to properly assess your needs and ultimately finish with a kiosk that will perform well.



## Follow These 5 Steps:

1. Establish the Function
2. Create the Layout / Design Considerations
3. Define Ergonomics and Comfort
4. Consider the Aesthetics
5. Select the Manufacturer

### 1. Establishing the Function

Determine the exact purpose for the kiosk. When considering a design, start by listing the functions that the attendant must perform and the purpose for having the kiosk. An attendant might be welcoming the public, providing information, selling tickets, accepting payments, controlling access, directing traffic, safeguarding property, or any combination thereof.

Functionality can often be affected by the requirements of various stakeholders within your organization. For example: Security (protection of people and property); Marketing (corporate image and branding); HR (employee welfare).

### 2. Creating the Layout / Design Considerations

Now that the functions of the kiosk and attendant have been determined, you can begin creating a workable layout that will best suit the purpose. There are standard, "off-the-shelf" type kiosks available. However, the chances they will suit specific needs (if you've done a proper evaluation) is low. More often than not, a customized configuration is required. This then, may be the ideal time to work with an experienced kiosk manufacturer to review your functional needs to create a floor plan with layout and elevations that work for the particular installation. Some of the best results come from such meetings where everyone, including the kiosk attendants have input.

Key discussion points to establish the proper design and functionality include: overall physical size (internal and external), site orientation, proximity to existing buildings and traffic flow, safe exit (door locations), counter height/size, chair height, fitments such as cash drawers and safes or cashiers equipment, transaction windows, visibility concerns, solar reflectivity concerns, electrical requirements,

heating, cooling, ventilation, task lighting, exterior lighting, washrooms and personal storage. There are really no stock answers to many of these matters, but a flexible, experienced kiosk manufacturer can easily customize their product to suit the installation.

### 3. Ergonomics and Comfort

A content employee is generally a productive one, and for many reasons, it is prudent to consider workplace ergonomics in the design process. Everything from the chair and counter to transaction window heights and reach should be evaluated to best suit the individuals.

A raised stool and high counter may call for a built-in adjustable foot rest. If attendants are required to stand, they would be pleased to have a well positioned hip pad or elbow rest. Even just the proper positioning of the kiosk on its island (and the island on the lot) can aid in reducing awkward reaching, repetitive strain and potential discomfort that may occur.

Often, kiosks are located a lengthy distance from the main buildings. If space and services are available and if budget permits, a washroom is integral to minimal service disruption at the kiosk. ➤

If you believe that a pleasant attendant in an attractive parking kiosk will help enhance your corporate image with clients, or better organize and protect your busy parking lot, simply try those five steps to help you get the product that satisfies all your needs.

And, at night your attendant may feel more comfortable and secure having the ability to reduce interior glare by turning off the kiosk lights and working with a built-in dimmable task light. This reduces reflection and provides a clearer view of the darkened surroundings.

#### 4. Consider Aesthetics in the Design Process

To best create that first impression, a kiosk must make a positive visual statement. Just like front line staff, your parking kiosk should also be “dressed for success” to meet and greet your clients and the public. Though many standardized product components can be applied to today’s kiosk, the appearance may be greatly enhanced with simple options such as exterior cladding panels, colored frame coating, custom roof designs, parapets, stone/stucco finishes, spandrel and tinted glass treatments, to name a few. Many options are available today.

opportunity for you to adjust the design to suit your preferences.

#### 5. Selecting your Manufacturer

Pre-qualifying a supplier based on prior experiences, reputation and references offers an opportunity to include the kiosk design as an integral part of the project, as the design team works through the first four steps of the process. Alternatively, you can engage an architect to help you if you have several functions that need to be met.

Regardless of how you wish to approach your design and procurement, when selecting a manufacturer to work either with you during design development, or for you afterwards, you might consider the following before making your choice.

- **Flexibility.** The manufacturer should take into consideration all of your needs when creating the kiosk.

proper anchoring methods, etc.). An identification plate bearing the serial/model number, kiosk design loads and manufacturer’s contact information attached to the kiosk is required for future relocation and repairs that may be required.

**Schedule.** The manufacturer must be able to complete the project from design through to installation in your required time frame. Many custom designed kiosks can take five to eight weeks on average from start to finish (including preparation of drawings and approvals). Your choice of features and finishes can affect scheduling, and your kiosk supplier should advise you of any long lead

- FLEXIBILITY
- EXPERIENCE
- COST EFFECTIVENESS
- PRODUCT DESIGN & IDENTIFICATION
- SCHEDULE
- SITE WORK



time items in advance, should substitutions be considered to improve scheduling.

- **Site Work.** Simultaneous to fabrication, many projects require site preparation work such as the installation of concrete islands, electrical conduits and bollards. The manufacturer might complete some or all of the site work, or coordinate with the project’s general contractor to help the project roll out smoothly.

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As a part of the evaluation process necessary to finalize the design and create the cost estimates, your kiosk manufacturer ideally should conduct a site assessment to identify elements that can impact the design, including structural (increased roof loading from drifting snow off an adjacent hi-rise), but they should also be checking for architectural features and finishes that could be integrated to blend with the environment. The supplier then can provide you with a no- or low-cost colored 3D rendering, illustrating the anticipated appearance of your kiosk in its proposed setting. This provides an

- **Experience.** Look for solid product design and fabrication background, including references from similar projects.

- **Cost effectiveness.** “Value” is not just the up-front cost, but may include projecting a specific corporate image, extending the kiosk life cycle or improving the productivity of the attendant. Make sure the manufacturer has put together the best “value” package for you to suit your needs and your budget.

- **Product Design & Identification.** The product must meet your local design/code requirements, (i.e., snow load, wind load, appropriate electrical or plumbing inspections,

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