

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **First-ever Global Parking Industry Survey Reveals Technology is Transforming How We Park Around the World**

*Innovative technology globally viewed as a top trend, and while decision-makers' attitudes toward parking are improving, more collaboration is needed.*

Do parking challenges and solutions differ significantly around the globe? Are Japan's parking priorities the same as those in Great Britain or Brazil? To answer these and other questions and begin to build a knowledge base that can benefit all countries, the Global Parking Association Leaders Summit (GPALS), a group comprised of parking associations around the world, recently surveyed parking professionals from 21 countries. The results, shared last week at the European Parking Association (EPA) Congress in Dublin, Ireland, revealed some universal similarities along with a few interesting country-specific differences.

#### **Technology is Revolutionizing Parking**

Within the past few years, technology has transformed the parking industry in many countries, making it easier for parking professionals to meet the demands of drivers who want to access, exit, find, and pay for parking. The majority of parking facility owners, operators, and managers polled listed the move toward innovative technology as the leading industry trend. Cited were GPS and mobile phone technology, electronic payment, sensor space-monitoring systems, and a shift toward accommodating electric vehicles.

#### **What Cities Are Seen as Having the Most Progressive Parking?**

Asked to name up to three cities within or outside of their own countries they would consider trendsetting or progressive in terms of their approach to parking, survey respondents most often cited London (named by nine countries), San Francisco (seven countries), Amsterdam and Paris (five countries each), and Barcelona, Seattle, and Tokyo (four countries). In Australia respondents also identified Perth, Melbourne and Sydney as being progressive about parking

#### **Sustainability an Industry Focus**

Along with technological improvements, the parking industry has been revolutionized by a heightened environmental awareness, with parking professionals assuming active roles in fostering sustainability in their communities. Sustainability proves to be a broadly-shared global concern, with most respondents saying the greatest environment benefit comes from on- and off-street guidance systems that enable drivers to find parking faster, reducing carbon emissions. Coming in a close second is energy-efficient lighting, seen as one of the top three priorities for a majority of countries, particularly Germany (85 percent) and Brazil (72 percent). The third leading trend of encouraging alternative travel through bike storage, car and bike share, and access to mass transit, is clearly seen as a priority in Norway (70 percent), followed by Britain, Australia, Ireland, Brazil, and the U.S.

“This is the first time parking associations around the world have collaborated to identify industry trends, and it is clear that we share many of the same challenges and opportunities,” says Shawn Conrad, CAE, executive director of the U.S.-based International Parking Institute (IPI), the world’s largest parking association. “Despite our many common issues, we see some interesting differences in countries’ priorities and circumstances, and I believe we will be able to learn much from each other.”

President of the Parking Association of Australia Larry Schneider attended the Summit in Dublin and reinforced the strong collaboration that exists in the parking industry globally whilst highlighting what his association sees as imperatives. “Australia continues to integrate technology and enhance sustainability throughout its parking operations whilst continuing to be innovative and address the needs of those that use parking facilities.” These messages certainly resounded loud and clear in the responses of the Australian survey.

While decision-makers’ attitudes toward parking appear to be positively shifting around the world, most respondents feel that more collaboration is needed, particularly between parking professionals, urban planners, and local government officials. This was most strongly voiced in the Scandinavian countries, but at least half of those polled in Australia, Britain, and Canada agreed. In Australia, local government, planners and architects emerged as the three groups in most need of increased collaboration with parking professionals.

According to Conrad, the survey results point to the need to tap parking expertise earlier in the urban planning process to avoid later issues with economic development, transportation flow, congestion, and design.

### **Societal Factors: Can Smart Parking Solutions Ease Traffic Congestion?**

It is estimated that about a third of the traffic in any city consists of people driving around looking for parking spaces, and 11 of the 13 countries surveyed listed traffic congestion as one of the most significant societal influences on parking. (Australia, Canada, and the U.S. viewed traffic congestion as the leading influence, followed by Brazil, Britain and Germany). One-third of those surveyed believe that parking’s greatest future challenge will be dealing with this scarcity of space and resources and rising mobility costs in urban areas.

Other societal influences on parking varied by region. They included economic pressures on retailers (listed first by Brazil, Britain, Ireland, and Spain), increased fuel prices (listed first by Spain and second or third by six other countries), the focus on environment and sustainability, and the desire for more liveable, walkable communities (both of which were rated most highly by all three Scandinavian countries, followed by Canada, Germany, and the United States). Only Brazil cited a shortage of qualified employees that was affecting parking.

The Global Parking Survey is not a statistically projectable study, but it’s a valuable snapshot and the beginning of knowledge-building and future collaborative projects among parking professionals around the world.

The surveys were conducted by individual country parking associations and analysed by the Washington, D.C.-based Market Research Bureau, with assistance from Giuliano Mingardo, a senior researcher in the Department of Regional, Port and Transport Economics at Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

The Global Parking Association Leaders Summit (GPALs) is an annual gathering of parking association leaders from around the world. Established by the International Parking Institute in 2012, the GPALs Summit is an opportunity for those leaders to gather, share information, and learn from each other in a friendly forum that encourages discussion and dialogue on a wide range of topics.

For a list of participating countries, and to view downloadable charts of survey results, visit [www.parking.org/gpals](http://www.parking.org/gpals).

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GPALs at a glance:

- Established in 2012
- 17 parking association members (and growing)
- In addition to the U.S.-based International Parking Institute, and the European Parking Association, countries represented include: Australia, Brazil, UK, Canada, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, and Sweden.
- GPALs parking trends survey translated into five languages
- Next meeting: June 1, 2014 at IPI Conference & Expo in Dallas, Texas
- More information and downloadable survey charts at [www.parking.org/GPALs](http://www.parking.org/GPALs)

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