

VIRGINIA HOSPITAL CENTER CASE STUDY

Background

Virginia Hospital Center is a 530,000 square foot, 394-bed, not-for-profit teaching medical facility serving the Washington, DC metropolitan area for more than 75 years. The Center features a nine-story hospital building and a fully equipped Emergency Department. The Security and Parking Department is responsible for the recent opening of an outpatient pavilion parking garage and managing three other parking garages on campus.

Obstacle

With the opening of the new pavilion parking garage, Chad Ellis, CHPA, Director of Security and Parking at Virginia Hospital Center, was looking for a solution that would allow more than 1,000 staff vehicles to get in and out of the garage more quickly. He was specifically seeking a supplier for high-quality parking tags. The department had previously parked most of the employees with a proximity card, which required too much time for employees to locate their card as they pulled up to the gate. This took each employee approximately five to six seconds to get through, which led to a backup of cars trying to enter the garage and many employees not getting to work on time.

Compounding the issue was the hospital's location in a residential area. The traffic back-up led to unhappy residents and an inconvenience to the surrounding neighborhood. In addition to the new Outpatient Pavilion parking garage, the Center has three other garages—all needing a better access control solution for streamlined employee parking. Ellis wanted to find a solution that would integrate flawlessly with the Center's access control system.

Ellis and his team had planned on continuing with their proximity card system for the new garage, but the COVID pandemic brought about changes that made them rethink their approach. Shuttling employees to the hospital from employee parking garages no longer seemed like the best, safest option. During the height of COVID, they shut down the employee shuttles and put the parking gates up for employees to enter and exit freely. Unfortunately, this resulted in a lack of tracking and a loss of parking access control. When they needed to track how many cars were coming onto campus during COVID, they realized they needed a system in place that allowed them to track vehicles while getting employees in and out of the garage much faster.

Solution

In Ellis's online search for a better parking garage parking solution, he found Weldon, Williams & Lick, Inc. (WW&L).

"I could tell from just the photos on the WW&L website that the quality seemed to be there. The printing on the tags, the ability to inlay the RFID chips—finding the perfect supplier was key, and WW&L delivered."

Ellis said that seeing the photos on the website and reading about the product made the choice easy.

Virginia Hospital Center

Location:

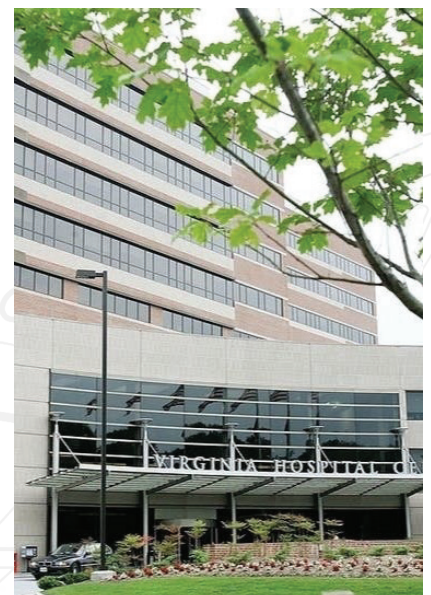
Arlington, VA

Challenges:

- Enable faster controlled entrance to the parking garage
- Reduce traffic congestion in the surrounding neighborhood
- Enable parking data and analytics to understand trends and identify volumes

Key Results:

- Faster, streamlined parking
- High-quality RFID parking permits
- Attentive parking solutions partners



He eventually connected with a representative from Tuxen & Associates—the agent for Nedap Identification Systems in the Americas. They provide various long-range vehicle and driver identification solutions primarily used in the security and parking industries. Ellis said that the Tuxen representative was responsive to emails and phone calls and made him comfortable choosing Nedap and WW&L as the supplier of the parking tags.

It was important to have a solution that worked and parking tags that looked great and functioned optimally. He has been impressed by the tag design and quality from WW&L. Knowing Nedap had a strategic partner like WW&L gave Ellis the confidence he needed to move forward with the project.

“Start to finish, it was a flawless process,” said Ellis. “From the implementation of Nedap to WW&L supplying the tags, everything went very smoothly.” This was the first time Ellis had worked with long-range readers like the Nedap system, and he was pleased with the results.

Outcomes

Ellis and his team observed several positive outcomes as a result of using WW&L as their parking permit printer.

Higher Quality Permit Product

Ellis reported that the WW&L hangtags are thicker than most of the hangtags he has used. They are more durable than a thinner hangtag and continue to hold up, even after sitting in the sun all day.

Fast Integration

The Security and Parking Department only had about six months to deploy the new parking access control solution. Ellis reported that the vendors worked together and met the deadlines so his team could get the system up and running optimally on schedule.

Attentive Service and Attention to Detail

Ellis credits the WW&L team for being highly responsive throughout the process. When he had a question, the team responded immediately and was always willing to make changes. In addition, WW&L provided fast shipping—Virginia Hospital Center purchased 12,000 parking tags at a moment's notice, and WW&L was able to produce and ship the order within 30 days. Ellis recently placed an order for 6,000 more tags. Even with the high number of products, Ellis reported that he has never had a WW&L tag not work.

Faster, Streamlined Parking

As for the Hospital's primary challenge—improving the flow of cars in and out of their parking garages—Ellis said their problems have improved drastically. The time necessary to get through the garage has gone from five to six seconds per car to one or two seconds.

“The gate opens for the cars and closes as soon as they drive through. No more fumbling for cards,” Ellis said. “And we've had absolutely positive feedback from employees about the new system; they are thrilled with the results.”

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Chad Ellis, CHPA, Director of Security and Parking at Virginia Hospital Center

Weldon, Williams & Lick, Inc.

Location:

Fort Smith, AR

Parking Solutions:

- High-security parking lot access and control systems
- RFID Technology
- UHF Technology
- RFID tags, decals fulfillment
- Custom artwork available
- Parking Accessories

