

# Dolphins Handle Snow Removal at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport



Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Standard Parking manages the parking lots for Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. During the winter season, each snowfall brings a small army of contracted snow removal equipment to the airport. Standard Parking is responsible for coordinating the snow removal effort across the huge expanse that is O'Hare, the nation's busiest airport.

## Problem:

Heavy equipment is staged at the airport at the start of a snowfall event. It is important to keep track of arrival times, the location of the equipment at the airport, and the duration of service. Of course, tracking is done outdoors in cold and wet conditions. An early "brick and stick" tracking system failed to hold up in Chicago's winter weather.

After the snowfall event, a great deal of administrative time was spent tabulating service periods, correcting the logs, and processing bills. Standard Parking had no reliable way to reconcile service invoices from contractors. This exposed them to billing discrepancies and over-charges, and often created contention with their service providers.

## Solution:



Purple Oak designed an equipment tracking system to meet Standard Parking's unique needs. The system is comprised of Honeywell hand-held computers, O'Neil portable printers, and custom-built mobile software.

Snow removal equipment is scanned as it arrives at the airport, and an acknowledgement receipt is printed and given to the driver. The equipment is also scanned and tracked as it moves from lot to lot, and idle time is recorded. When the equipment is ready to leave the airport, the system prints a return acknowledgement receipt.

At the end of a shift, the data is transferred to Standard Parking's master database for processing.

## Success:

- Contractors receive printed receipts with start times and service periods. This has resulted in accurate invoices, as service providers know not to "fudge the numbers."
- Post-event administrative hours and costs have been greatly reduced.
- Contractor service records are easily retrieved and verified, practically eliminating billing discrepancies.
- Better resource allocation: The system offers easy access to equipment usage records, allowing Standard Parking to better plan for each upcoming snowfall event.



847-965-8771

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