DALLAS FORT WORTH INTERNATIONAL (DFW) AIRPORT launched its Courtesy Patrol program in 2013 to provide assistance to guests parking at its terminal garages. Members of this team seek out guests who need assistance with jump-starts, tire inflations, and locating vehicles. Service is provided seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and team members are selected based on:

- Customer service focus.
- Being friendly and outgoing.
- Willingness to calm and reassure guests.
- Knowledge of the basic services provided at DFW Airport.

By focusing on customer service the team is prepared to meet the demands of interacting with customers who need assistance. During the first year of operation, the team refined the program by providing input on how to operate efficiently and what equipment worked best. They exceeded expectations during this first year and continue to do so. The 48,524 total guests assisted got help with:

- 19,594 jump-starts.
- 26,120 located vehicles.
- 2,810 tire inflations and other services.

Happily, the team received 1,523 compliments from guests. That feedback arrives in the form of phone calls, emails, and social media comments and are disseminated to employees through supervisors, the parking guest relations...
How DFW Airport’s Courtesy Patrol helped customers, eased parking, and grew a giant fan base.
office, or the DFW Airport corporate communications team. Some comments include:

■ “I was assisted by the nicest employee. ... He was very patient and kind. He did not make me feel stupid even though I was already feeling that way.”
■ “Fast efficient and friendly service.”
■ “People are often at their most helpless state when traveling, when resources on which we rely are harder to find, and everything seems more expensive and time consuming. ... Friendly, professional, complimentary help offered more than a ray of hope. It was our way home ...”
■ “Was so pleasant, easy to work with, and assured me that everything would be OK. ... I couldn’t have asked for a more kind man to assist me this afternoon.”
■ “This is one reason why I will continue to make DFW Airport the choice when it comes to air travel. It is because I know that I can rely on your team ... to be there when needed.”
■ “He actually cared!!!”
■ “What a life saver!! Thank you for offering such a great service to those using your airport!”
■ “Agent came to our rescue, even providing ice water for two hot, lost travelers. Great service!”
■ “I wanted to send a quick ‘thank you’ ... Luckily, you all had noticed this and placed a sticker on my car with your contact information. ... That was my first ‘thank you’ moment. What a relief to have folks there onsite that can help with issues like this. ... I could tell he was truly interested in helping me and not just working for a paycheck.”
■ “Your courtesy service is very much appreciated ...”

In addition, members of the team have expressed how they enjoy their jobs:

■ “Our satisfaction is received from the relieved expressions on their faces and their smiles.”
■ “It feels good to be able to assist someone.”
■ “I enjoy coming to work, knowing I will be able to make someone’s day.”
■ “Best job in the world.”
■ “Where else can you work and never receive a complaint.”
■ “I feel like I always make a difference in someone’s life.”

Parking at the Airport
DFW has more than 40,000 parking spaces throughout five terminal garages and four surface lots. The airport’s unique design provides customers with a multitude of options of where to park. When customers return to a different terminal from where they originally parked, they can take advantage of our Skylink or Terminal Link transportation to get them back to their original garage.

Our team helps provide customer assistance to guests who may not be as familiar with DFW’s parking options as frequent flyers. At times, guests may be in a hurry when they park. Upon their return, they often walk into the garage of the terminal they returned to and realize that something is not right. Not realizing they departed from a different terminal, they begin...
their search for their vehicle. The Courtesy Patrol team has developed a sixth sense to find customers who fit this profile and with just a few simple questions, usually has customers on their way to their cars in no time.

The team also looks for vehicles with lights left on and tires low on air. When these vehicles are discovered, team members post a note on the driver’s side window to let them know there may be a problem and offer a number to call for assistance.

We have received compliments from guests who did not require service but found a notice on their vehicle indicating a light was left on. They tell us it’s comforting to know that people are looking after their vehicles and providing them with notices. The team provides an additional layer of security as they are continually driving through the terminal garages, supplementing the department of public safety’s patrols.

Getting Started

The program runs well and is a big hit with customers, but it didn’t go flawlessly from the start. Some of the challenges encountered when starting this operation were obtaining and maintaining the necessary equipment, developing and redeveloping the reports used to track services, and determining schedules and manpower. Each Courtesy Patrol team member is provided with a jump pack for jump-starts and a tire inflator while driving around the airport. The team partners with our vehicle maintenance department to get great training on the proper ways to jump-start all types of vehicles and what to look for to determine if it is safe to provide a jump-start.

Additional challenges included sharing vehicles with the parking guest operations team, which means vehicles were scarce at times. However, this year, the airport has approved five dedicated vehicles for the Courtesy Patrol team. These white cars have become known as the White Knights, as they are always coming to customers’ rescue. These dedicated vehicles have made a huge difference, and thanks to having them, the team is able to concentrate more on assisting guests rather than hunting for cars to use.

The airport understands the value of providing an outstanding experience for our customers and has recognized the team’s efforts. Team members take great pride in the vehicles they drive and strive to keep them clean and ready for our guests. At the end of their shifts, they fuel and wash the vehicles and vacuum the inside.

This Courtesy Patrol service is provided free to customers and operates without advertising. Employees on the curb and at the valet kiosks have access to the Courtesy Patrol team if a guest asks for assistance. During the four years this program has been in existence, customers have shared the information through word of mouth and social media.

The Courtesy Patrol program at DFW Airport has been a large success. Our team drives an average of 161,175 miles per year, equivalent to nearly seven trips around the world, or approximately 67 round trips between IPI headquarters and DFW Airport. When it comes to enhancing the customer experience, this program has far exceeded the expectations of the operation and the customer. The future is bright for continued growth of the program, and we are very excited to exceed our guests’ expectations day after day through this valuable program.

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