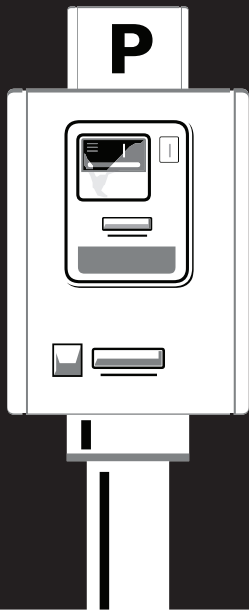# CASE STUDY

LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Los Angeles Department of Transportation and
Medeco Nexgen: Secured Parking Technology
Pays Off for Second Largest Metro Market in U.S.

Stolen or lost parking meter keys make unattended meters open targets for many cities. The result is lost revenue that is almost impossible to trace. The City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) generates more than $50M from managing more than 38,000 metered parking spaces sprawling over 500 square miles.

The task of managing parking revenue was a daunting one for the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) because thieves are always looking for an easy way to get a little cash—or coins, as is the case in city-operated parking meters across the U.S. The Medeco Nexgen eCylinder fit the bill for such a large-scale metered parking program.

The Key to Thousands of Dollars

Retrieval of the coins is accessed by an independent contractor who uses a key to open and close the meter up to three days a week. If one of the old mechanical keys had been stolen or lost, there was the potential for thousands of dollars of lost revenue from these unattended meters, depending on the size of the zone to which the key was assigned.

A secondary threat to revenue was entire parking meters being stolen from time to time. Thieves would cut off the tops of the meters, take them away, remove the cylinder and make duplicate keys that fit the cylinder. The LADOT parking meters were not previously individually keyed, so if a key was duplicated, it required rekeying all of the meters in that zone. An eCylinder lock eliminates the ability to duplicate a key—forever.

LADOT needed a way to ensure meters were being serviced according to the collection schedule—the number one request was an audit report of the time and date stamp that can be recorded for every attempt to open or close the meter. LADOT's contract meter collectors are issued keys at the time of deployment that are then returned when the route collection is complete.

A new system would provide an audit of how collectors were making their way through the routes in a timely manner. In addition, the new eCylinder system would solve the need—and cost—for rekeying because if a key had been duplicated, it might be days before anyone was aware it had happened.

> *The Medeco Nexgen system has transformed the security of L.A.'s parking meter operation by providing unprecedented protection from unauthorized access and an essential, exhaustive audit trail. The engineers at Medeco tailored the original product for our application to produce a cost-effective solution that is quick and easy to install.*
>
> *—Dan Mitchell*

Dan Mitchell is a Senior Transportation Engineer for the LADOT and Medeco's primary point person for the City of Los Angeles.

Large-Scale Needs Demanded a Stellar Solution

Medeco created a trial program for LADOT in 2005 that covered installation of 1,200 electronic locks. The meter locks typically come pre-installed on the vault doors; the entire door is then replaced on the meter rather than just the lock.

The new product development team at Medeco discovered that by simply adjusting some mechanical dimensions on the existing Medeco Nexgen product line, the eCylinders could be customized and retrofitted into existing meters without any changes to the meter doors, creating huge value for the city with relative ease of installation—just two minutes instead of ten. The Medeco Nexgen technology was effective in securing revenue and managing collection activities.

Based on the success of the trial program, LADOT and Medeco deployed a second and third round of eCylinders throughout the city, bringing the total number of upgrades to meters and pay stations to over 35,000 eCylinders. The project was completed in June 2013.

The LADOT project was closely managed by the team at Medeco, who worked diligently with the City of Los Angeles over a five-year time frame to identify and address any issues that arose during deployment of the units. The team strived to meet the needs and concerns of the municipality—the largest city in California and the second largest urban area in the nation.

The team's leaders observed: "Every project of this magnitude is going to have issues along the way, and working in a city with a population of 3.7M people who rely on cars to get around means you need a lot of parking meters—and each meter needs to be secure and accountable."

Medeco Nexgen

provides access control, audit capability, and physical security in one self-contained solution.

- Keys are programmed using the Medeco Nexgen Security Manager Parking Edition software.

- Keys only open meters specified by the administrator and will not operate outside of scheduled times.

- Both lock and key hold complete records of every opening or attempted opening of the meter.

- Keys can be retrofitted into existing meters without any changes to the meter doors, and this capability creates huge value—the installation is simple.

LADOT and Its Future Parking Revenue

This level of customer service is what led LADOT to entrust Medeco with the next level of the parking revenue project. In addition to securing the single-space parking meters, LADOT needed the same physical security along with scheduling and auditing capabilities for hundreds of its multi-space parking pay stations and collection canisters, which house cash deposits from the route collections.

Medeco launched its Mobile Programming Units recently, and the LADOT maintenance department will have the ability soon to respond to repair calls directly from the field without having to return to home base to have keys reprogrammed. The Mobile Programming Unit allows the key holder to update key credentials from the field, eliminating the need to recall the key.

Medeco's OEM division director is happy to report, "It's very rewarding to be part of such a win-win project. Not only has the project system performed well and created significant value for the City of Los Angeles, it has also made a big impact on Medeco's business and demonstrated our ability to manage a project of this scale."

Looking back on the project, Dan Mitchell adds, "Medeco has gone above and beyond my expectations from start to finish. Its high level of customer service and commitment to stand behind its product stands out as a shining example in the industry."