ACF | TECHNOLOGIES

ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT NATIONAL PARKS WITH A QUEUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

eGuide

National parks allow visitors to connect with nature, explore the great outdoors, and learn about the natural world. This desire to connect with natural spaces in the US is growing. In 2019, US national parks saw **327.5 million visitors**, while in 2020, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park received over **12 million visitors** alone.

This popularity and increase of interest, especially following the pandemic, present the challenge of managing visitor flow, ensuring visitor satisfaction, and protecting the park's delicate ecosystems. And this is where smart systems, such as queue management, come in.

RECORD-BREAKING VISITATION: AN OPPORTUNITY TO INNOVATE

The National Park Service (NPS) manages over 400 national parks, monuments, and historic sites across the United States, attracting millions of visitors each year. However, as previously mentioned, with increasing popularity, many of these parks are facing significant overcrowding, straining park resources, and degrading the visitor experience.

According to a **report** from the U.S. Department of the Interior, many national parks are experiencing record-breaking visitation, leading to overcrowded facilities, traffic congestion, and damage to natural resources. In fact, the report states that 12 out of the 20 most visited national parks experienced "extreme" or "high" levels of congestion in 2018, proving that the issue arose before the pandemic and is increasing in the wake of the bans.

Overcrowding can significantly impact the visitor experience, including long wait times, difficulty finding parking, and limited access to popular attractions. Additionally, overcrowding can lead to increased noise levels, decreased air quality, and damage to park infrastructure.

To address these issues, the National Park Service has been looking into innovative methods to manage visitor flow, decrease congestion, and safeguard park resources. Implementing queue management systems (QMS) is one solution among others, such as digital signage and customer feedback.

While a QMS can assist in minimizing congestion and improve the overall tourist experience by enabling efficient park admission, timely access to popular activities, and real-time communication, digital signage can help visitors know where they stand and learn how to get where they want to go. Finally, customer feedback can provide visitor insights about national park services to help decision makers understand what people enjoy, dislike, and expect.

SMART SOLUTIONS: TRANSFORMING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND MAKING A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Providing a great experience for visitors is as crucial as taking care of the natural space, which hosts many native animals and plants. In other words, it can positively impact customers and the environment. Here are some solutions that can help:

1

QUEUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A QMS helps national parks manage the flow of visitors and reduce wait times at entry points. The system can direct visitors to the appropriate areas based on their ticket type, group size, or other factors, reducing congestion and improving the overall park entry experience. With efficient park entry, visitors can spend less time waiting in line and more time enjoying the park.

Book a Time Slot
A QMS also allows visitors to reserve a time slot, via an appointment scheduling solution, for popular attractions or activities, reducing wait times and ensuring a more enjoyable experience. During peak visitation times, crowds can be overwhelming, and visitors may have to wait in long lines to access popular attractions.

Real-time Communication
This is a significant benefit since visitors can receive real-time information on park activities, closures, and wait times, helping them make informed decisions about their visit. This can reduce frustration and confusion and help visitors make the most of their time in the park.

Real-time communication can also help park staff manage visitor expectations, plan for crowd control, and respond to emergencies.

Personalization
By providing tailored recommendations for activities, events, and attractions based on visitor preferences or previous visitation data, national parks can personalize the visitor experience. This helps visitors feel more connected to the park and creates lasting memories. Personalization can also help park staff understand visitor behavior and preferences, enabling them to create more targeted marketing campaigns and improve park offerings.

2

DIGITAL SIGNAGE

Digital signage has emerged as a powerful tool for communication and engagement in various industries, and national parks can greatly benefit from its implementation. Incorporating this software can revolutionize visitor communication, facilitate navigation, promote park offerings, educate visitors, ensure safety, and support sustainability.

Enhance Visitor Communication and Keep Them Informed

The system allows national parks to deliver real-time information to visitors in a visually compelling manner. Important updates, such as trail closures, weather alerts, safety guidelines, and park regulations, can be efficiently communicated through eye-catching displays.

Moreover, digital signage can play a crucial role in disseminating vital information to visitors in emergencies. Alerts regarding wildfires, severe weather conditions, or other hazards can be displayed promptly, ensuring visitor safety and facilitating swift response and evacuation procedures.

Wayfinding and Navigation

National parks often cover vast areas with numerous trails, attractions, and facilities. This software can serve as an interactive wayfinding system, guiding visitors to their desired destinations. Interactive maps, trail markers, and directional signage can help visitors navigate the park more easily, reducing confusion and enhancing visitor satisfaction.

Promoting Park Amenities and Programs

Digital signage provides an effective platform to showcase the diverse offerings of national parks. It can highlight upcoming events, ranger-led programs, educational activities, and exhibits. By promoting park amenities and programs, digital signage encourages visitors to explore and engage with the park beyond the surface level, leading to a more enriching experience.

It can also display interpretive content, such as wildlife information, geological facts, historical narratives, and conservation messages. Engaging visuals, videos, and interactive elements can educate visitors about the park's unique features, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of the environment and heritage.

Environmental Sustainability

Compared to traditional printed signage, digital signage is more environmentally friendly. It eliminates the need for printing, reduces paper waste, and allows for easy content updates. By adopting digital signage solutions, national parks can align with their conservation ethos and reduce their ecological footprint.
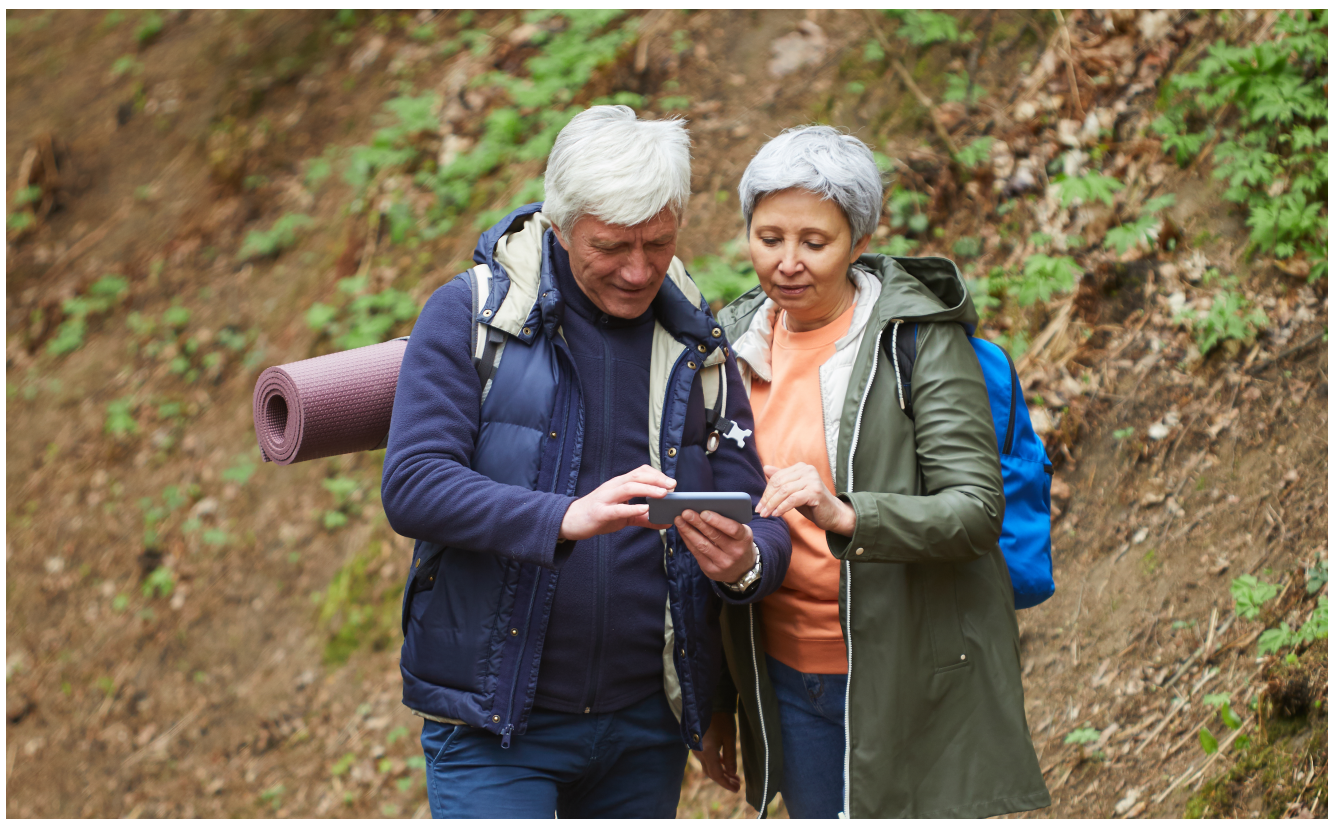
3

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Using a customer feedback service demonstrates a commitment to transparency and accountability. Visitors appreciate when their opinions are valued, and implementing a feedback service shows that the park management actively seeks input from visitors. This can help build trust, foster positive relationships, and create a sense of ownership and pride among visitors, leading to increased loyalty and repeat visits.

Obtaining and analyzing customer feedback is crucial for national parks to improve their offerings and continuously enhance visitor satisfaction. Here are three key benefits of applying a customer feedback service in national parks:

Visitor Experience Enhancement
It allows national parks to gain valuable insights into the visitor experience. By collecting feedback on various aspects such as park facilities, amenities, interpretive programs, customer service, and overall satisfaction, parks can identify areas for improvement. Understanding visitor preferences, concerns, and suggestions enables parks to make informed decisions and implement changes that enhance the overall visitor experience.

Operational Efficiency Improvements
Provides valuable data that helps national parks identify operational inefficiencies and to streamline processes. By analyzing feedback on queue lengths, wait times, staff responsiveness, and park logistics, parks can make data-driven decisions to optimize resource allocation, staff training, and park operations. This improves efficiency, reduces wait times, and better overall park management.

Sustainability Initiatives
National parks are responsible for protecting and preserving the environment. Customer feedback service can be leveraged to gather insights and suggestions from visitors on sustainable practices and environmental initiatives. By actively seeking feedback on conservation efforts, waste management, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly practices, parks can engage visitors in sustainability dialogues and implement strategies that align with their conservation goals. This fosters a sense of environmental stewardship among visitors and promotes sustainable practices within the park and its surrounding communities.

ACF TECHNOLOGIES OFFERS SMART SOLUTIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Our goal at ACF Technologies is to transform the way customers experience national parks, not only by providing smart solutions such as queue management, digital signage, and customer feedback but supporting innovation and sustainability at the same time. Visitors can have a good experience, leaders and staff can learn to improve their approach, and nature can still be cared for.

Scan below to schedule a demo
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a sustainable experience with
our smart solutions.

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