



## Parking Payment Provider Drives Innovation and Convenience with Reliable SMS Service

### BACKGROUND

Since 2002, EasyPark, headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden, has offered a more convenient way for drivers to pay for parking in over 750,000 parking spaces across Scandinavia, as well as in Germany, the UK, Holland, and Italy. Instead of carrying a pocket full of change to feed the meter, or walking to and from a parking machine, EasyPark lets drivers pay for parking through their mobile phone. Registered users simply call EasyPark to begin and stop the parking transaction. Frequent parkers such as electricians, plumbers, lawyers, auditors, and other professionals find the service convenient, cost effective, and efficient. They never have to risk a fine, and all transactions are detailed on their credit card or monthly statement. Recently, as a result of user demand, EasyPark has added SMS purchasing to its service.

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PATRIK MOSSBERG | Managing Director | EasyPark

### CHALLENGE

While convenient, the interactive voice response (IVR)-based application required users to pre-register. EasyPark was interested in expanding its market beyond professionals to the general public who parked less frequently. There was widespread interest in the service, but occasional users were hesitant to pre-register. “To expand our business, we needed an easy-to-use, reliable application that could be used by any member of the public that did want to establish an account with EasyPark,” says Patrik Mossberg, CEO at EasyPark.

## SOLUTION

EasyPark turned to SMS to serve the needs of occasional users. To buy one hour of parking, drivers simply send an SMS message to EasyPark and include their car plate number. Traffic wardens can verify that drivers have paid through a link to a central database. Ten minutes before the time expires, drivers receive a warning, and can send another SMS message to purchase an additional hour if required. The charge is billed to their mobile phone, similar to the purchase of mobile content. Because the mobile carrier already has an ongoing relationship with the user, there is no need to sign up to an additional account. Drivers can use the service as a one-off, or on a regular basis.

A critical component of the application is the reliable delivery of SMS messages. Failure to deliver messages can result in loss of revenue for municipalities and mobile carriers, as well as possible parking fines for users who assumed they had paid.

Since 2004, EasyPark had distributed receipts and reminders to users via SMS messaging from mBlox. “mBlox had been our SMS gateway for all the countries we cover,” says Mossberg. “For this new SMS service, we needed to get to market as quickly as possible with a vendor that we knew could be reliable, responsive, and flexible, as well as provide the reach and right set of capabilities for our business. mBlox was clearly that vendor.”

mBlox fulfilled all the requirements EasyPark had. Even just a few undelivered messages could seriously impact the customer experience and jeopardize success. mBlox had already proven its ability to deliver messages reliably. Reach is becoming increasingly more important as EasyPark grows the service beyond Scandinavia. “As we expanded, we knew mBlox’s global network would give us the European reach we needed,” says Mossberg.

Setting up and marketing the new service through all the mobile carriers within multiple regions could be a daunting task for a small organization like EasyPark. “mBlox had the established relationships with telcos in these areas, which facilitated our rollout,” says Mossberg.

Not only has the service been well accepted, the business model adopted by EasyPark to charge pay-as-you-go users a premium for SMS parking ensures a reasonable margin. Users are willing to pay this small premium for the peace of mind and convenience of SMS parking payments.

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## BENEFITS

EasyPark, through its IVR and SMS payment options, offers a highly convenient parking payment service for regular and occasional parkers. The services have been very well received and all users, including professionals and the frequent parkers, have become users of the SMS service. By the beginning of 2008, the EasyPark service had already taken up a 10 percent share of the market for electronic parking and hopes are high that the SMS service will help boost this even further. “We currently generate over 50,000 transactions per month and anticipate this service to gain as much as a 25 to 30 percent share within the next 12 to 18 months,” says Mossberg.

Australia  
T +61 (0) 2 9360 3917  
F +61 (0) 2 9360 3917  
sales\_australia@mblox.com

France  
T +33 (0) 1 70 38 51 50  
F +33 (0) 1 70 38 54 12  
sales\_france@mblox.com

Germany  
T +49 (0) 2 11 55 04 92 24  
F +49 (0) 2 11 55 04 92 31  
sales\_germany@mblox.com

Singapore  
T +65 62485761  
F +65 62485762  
sales\_apac@mblox.com

Spain  
T +34 (0) 91 790 12 12  
F +34 (0) 91 790 11 12  
sales\_spain@mblox.com

Sweden  
T +46 (0) 8 791 2700  
F +46 (0) 8 791 2790  
sales\_sweden@mblox.com

United Kingdom  
T +44 (0) 20 8432 1260  
F +44 (0) 20 8432 1290  
sales\_uk@mblox.com

USA  
T +1 408 617 3700  
F +1 408 617 3799  
sales\_americas@mblox.com

