



“PARKING POLICIES ARE LAX AND LACKING IN VISION”

Car parking solutions, today, are the vogue. **Ajay Raina, CEO, Tedra Automotive Solutions**, talks to **CT** about its potential and the dire need for a public parking policy. Excerpts.

Urbanisation at a rapid pace and rising aspirations of the middle-class has led to an unprecedented growth in the use of private automobiles.

What is the overall market like for car parking?

My own estimates are this is a market of about Rs 500-600 crore annually. There is no centralised or published data available on parking systems. Most of the players are closely held companies. To the best of my knowledge, companies in the organised sector like Wohr Parking Systems, Klaus, RR Parkon, Tedra, and PARI, among a couple of others, have a market share of about 60%, amounting to about Rs350 crore. The balance is shared by small and unorganised players.

Your website shows a variety of interestingly shaped solutions. Tell us which, among these, are the most requested for and why.

Actually, parking systems have nothing to do with shapes. It has more to do with parking requirements of a project. Keeping specific constraints in mind, a design and a system is subsequently suggested. What we provide is a customised solution, considering all variables like available space, costs, and

the regulatory framework involved. We work closely with our customers and create the space from whatever small areas available by using height, width and depth intelligently.

Our range starts from a simple stacker that can immediately double a parking capacity, to a puzzle park that can go up to seven levels vertically, a mini rotary system that works like a merry-go-round and can park 14 cars in a space meant for just two! Then, there's the tower park that can park up to 70 cars vertically in a space meant for three cars and a cart system that can park anywhere between 100-1000 cars. Our designs are robust and tested and similar systems can be seen running in Japan, US, Korea, China and other advanced countries.

What are the demand drivers? Which category forms the biggest segment of customers?

Urbanisation at a rapid pace and rising aspirations of the middle-class has led to an unprecedented growth in the use of private automobiles. This is a problem further

compounded with lack of public transport facilities and poor traffic management policies. This has further led to an acute shortage of parking spaces in most of India's large urban centres like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Pune. In Mumbai, parking spaces are being sold at Rs15 to Rs 20 lakhs at prime locations. Parking a vehicle is a key concern today. The biggest user of automated car parking are actually new constructions where a car parking facility is mandatory as per the building guidelines laid down by respective corporations. Here, we plan for solutions at the inception stage along with the developer.

The second large segment are existing buildings that seek enhancement in the numbers of car parking spaces. Here, we have to plan parking systems as per the area available for use. Another large emerging segment is public parking facilities with initiatives being taken by urban local bodies to create automated multi-parking facilities for the general public.



Can you briefly take us through a cost-benefit analysis from the customer's viewpoint?

Land is a very scarce resource, especially in large cities. At 32 mt/car that is ideally required to park a vehicle, this is probably the most pinching and expensive use of real estate in urban India. Therefore, the answer to this is vertical parking and use of automation. Once the capital cost of equipment is taken care of, it costs anything between just Rs400 for a simple solution to a maximum of Rs 900 per month for a high-end parking solution, to maintain the system. Cost advantages and other benefits, therefore, over a conventional parking system, are tremendous. Anybody buying a system from us will remain engaged with us for the lifetime of the system which is between 20-25 years. Our company has a strong team, committed to provide maintenance service 24/7 to the customer.

The biggest demand can perhaps come from the municipality and civic authorities if they decide to construct parking solutions for the general public. Comment.

Parking policies of present and past governments are, and have been lax and lacking in vision. In cities today, the vehicle population is running almost hand-in-hand with the human population. For instance, Delhi has a vehicle population of around 90 lakhs but no parking policy for public parking! The result is there to see. Our capital city is among the most polluted cities in the world and even short distances are tough to commute, if not impossible. This is becoming true of all our major cities, be it Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune or Kolkata. The health of a city, liveability, how a city feels,

looks, how its residents move, the traffic-flow, how much time do they spend commuting and the pollution generated is solely decided by how a state manages its traffic, and therefore parking.

Even as I write this, across the country, 85-90% of public parking is happening in narrow lanes, roadsides, street spots, corners, footpaths, by-lanes and anywhere else you can think of! The majority of this happens free of cost or at very low costs, in a way subsidising the use of private vehicles and chaos. People at any time prefer to drive rather than cycle, walk or take the public transport, even if available. There is a dire need to have a proper policy framework for management of our cities, especially developing a parking policy and management. We must curb the free-for-all, anywhere and everywhere approach and reduce the area given for parking.

I advocate steps such as formulating a policy for designated parking areas, parking duration, pricing of parking to generate revenues for better facilities and discourage long hours, ownership of multiple vehicles and encouraging car pools to work. Police and the traffic management authorities are the frontlines in traffic laws. They should be mandated to enforce rules binding on vehicular traffic without any fear or favour. We should introduce information technology and technological tools like communication gadgets and radar for traffic monitoring. These are highly relevant for solving complex issues relating to parking problems and traffic management. Cities should adopt an area-wise parking plan with a thorough understanding of the supply and demand, peak and non-peak traffic situations. ■

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