

CASE STUDY

Signage Changes Improve Experience and Reduce Vehicle Damage



Shaping Tomorrow Today

Challenge

Effective signage has been identified as one of the most important ways to ensure a positive customer rental experience. Operative signage is paramount in ensuring the rental process flows smoothly from the Airport to RAC customer service counters, to vehicle pick-up and finally to facility exit.

Ensuring efficient signage often means working closely with Airport staff to identify creative solutions to signage issues not addressed in the design process.

Solution

Upon assuming the operations role at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) facility, numerous signage concerns were immediately identified by CS Operators. Several signage solutions to include:

1. Clarification on where to catch the terminal bus
2. Which level to exit the elevator/escalator to access vehicles specific to each rent-a-car company
3. Which aisles correspond to vehicle return
4. Which level to exit the helix from each rent-a-car company floor



DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE: Temporary and new signs to buses.



SEATTLE ConRAC SIGNAGE: Customers quickly recognize RAC logos, but do not understand the “up,” arrow indicates going into the building and the left/right arrows only apply to MVP/Elite customers.

5. Which lane to use entering/exiting the facility for highways and rent-a-car company access

Airport Shuttle Platform Directions

Upon embarking on the fifth floor to catch the shuttle to the Airport terminal, many customers confused the west-facing drop-off area for the pick-up area due to its close proximity. Once identified, temporary signs were used to correctly direct customers to the eastside of the building, which have since been replaced by permanent signage fixtures.

Elevator and Escalator Exits

Another source of confusion stemmed from lack of direction as to which floor vehicle pick-up is located. Concerns such as this could have easily been addressed in the development and design phase, however CS Operators has implemented fixes to provide more clarity.

“Signage has been an issue at every ConRAC that has ever opened.”

- Lorie Tallarico, Avis Rent A Car

Vehicle Return Aisle

Signs identifying which road aisles corresponded to which RAC return area were fixed level to the ceiling and therefore could not be seen behind beams while driving. CS Operators advocated to have the signs lowered to enable visibility and provide better direction to drivers.

Helix Exit

Similar to vehicle return aisle signage, exits from the complex’s helix structure included signage attached to the ceiling resulting in reduced visibility due to beams and pipes. This made it very challenging for drivers to know at what level to exit or enter the helix. The solution implemented included placing signs at eye-level using easily identifiable RAC logos and arrows to indicate lanes and exits.



ROADWAY SIGNAGE: New signs clearly indicate specific lanes for drivers.



VEHICULAR WAY FINDING: Previous helix signs hung from the ceiling and were obstructed from view.

Entering/Exiting the Facility

Initial road signage indicating the entrance and exit of the facility was difficult to read on a white background. Additionally, confusion was compounded as arrows did not line-up above appropriate lanes, resulting in confused drivers and an increased number of accidents. This was particularly problematic for drivers exiting the facility, who are required to merge quickly – some across as many as four lanes.

Challenges for those entering ConRAC were due to the quick merge of roadways. Though a small yield sign existed, it didn’t provide sufficient warning. CS Operators spent considerable time lobbying the airport to remedy the situation before more collisions occurred – the solution included adding a speed bump and better signage, resulting in fewer accidents.

Background

The Consolidated Rent-A-Car Facility in SeaTac, Washington is a Port of Seattle facility, housing operations of 13 Rent-A-Car brands. Open to the public for full operations May 17, 2012, the facility measures 2.1 million square feet, and includes four Quick Turn-Around areas outfitted with 96 prep and fueling stations, 15 car wash bays, and six maintenance bays. It is a working environment for over 600 employees. Each of the six underground gasoline fuel storage tanks have a capacity of 20,000 gallons, with RACs utilizing an allocated number of the 96 nozzles that dispense fuel from the shared tank system.

About Conrac Solutions

Headquartered in Renton, WA, the Conrac Solutions family of companies is the only entity in the United States to have privately developed, on-airport, consolidated rent-a-car facilities (ConRACs). As developer, financial sponsor and operator of ConRACs, the company has experience in pre-development and feasibility, financing strategies, design and construction, activation, operations, asset management and capital project management. Completed projects include Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, and Bismarck Airport. ConRACs currently under contract for planning and delivery include Bradley International Airport (Hartford, CT), Newark Liberty International Airport and Reno Tahoe International Airport. For more information go to: <https://www.conracsolutions.com>.

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