

Case Study

Patrolling a New Terminal with Segway PTs

Airport Patrolling

Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport



Detroit Metropolitan Airport is the 11th largest airport in North America, serving nearly 36 million passengers in 2006. In 2002 the airport opened its newly renovated and expanded McNamara Terminal, and in 2003 the Wayne County Airport Authority Board authorized the sale of \$825 million in bonds to fund future airport expansion, which includes a new 26-gate North Terminal that is scheduled to open in 2008. Faced with a mile-long main concourse in the new McNamara Terminal and an 800-foot passenger tunnel connecting the concourses, the airport police were looking for new ways to efficiently patrol their bustling facility. According to Sergeant James McKernan, the Airport Authority found a solution in the Segway® Personal Transporter (PT).

"The Airport Authority made the decision to purchase three Segway PTs for the airport police department, one for the fire department and one for the civilian division of public safety at the airport," says McKernan. "I was among the officers who were initially trained by Segway Inc., and I became the Police Segway PT coordinator responsible for training other officers and overseeing protocols for their use.

"Initially, some of the officers were very skeptical about the Segway PT – not from a technical or performance standpoint, but how they would do riding it. As soon as they saw how easy it was to operate and cover their patrol routes, most of them immediately changed their views. They were like 'if I have to run the entire concourse during an emergency how effective will I be when I arrive at the scene? The Segway PT gets me there fast and ready to deal with the situation.'"

A Positive Tool for Community Policing

The owners of the shops and restaurants that line the terminal were at first quite enthralled by the high-tech tools. "The retail managers would come out of the shops and engage our officers, which was great," says McKernan. They would ask how it balances and how fast it would go, and of course they all wanted to ride it. But the most enthusiastic group is still the kids. Even now, more than a year after we began using them, the kids we see when we are on patrol all begin conversations with the officers. It is an amazing icebreaker and an extremely positive tool for community policing."

More than 20 officers are now trained to use the Segway PTs, which are now on patrol 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The specialized police models carry cargo

"If we get a call for a medical emergency or a lost child, our officers can get to the scene and get the problem resolved much more quickly if they are riding Segway PTs."

-Sergeant James McKernan
Detroit Metropolitan Airport Police

Executive Summary

CUSTOMER

Detroit Metropolitan Airport, Detroit, Michigan

MARKET SECTOR

Airport Security

THE CHALLENGE

- Patrol a new airport terminal with a mile-long concourse
- Respond to emergency calls wherever they occur in the facility

THE SOLUTION

- Purchase Segway PTs for the airport police and train 20 officers in their use

BENEFITS TO THE CUSTOMER

- Patrol officers on Segway PTs are able to double the distance they can patrol on foot
- Officers can respond to emergency calls very quickly and get them resolved

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bags that the officers use to transport gear and equipment and each unit has police decals on the fenders and agency logos on the front cargo bag. McKernan estimates that prior to the arrival of the Segway PTs each officer could efficiently walk just eight to nine miles a day on patrols. Now they can easily patrol twice that distance on the Segway PTs and not get fatigued doing it.

The Segway PTs have also dramatically cut response times. "If we get a call for a medical emergency or a lost child, our officers can get to the scene and get the problem resolved much more quickly if they are riding Segway PTs," says McKernan. "On the second week that we had the Segway PTs, officers were dispatched to a possible heart attack. The officers would have had to run a considerable distance with equipment to render aid. As it was, they used their Segway PTs to get to the victim much sooner and render aid without being fatigued. That's exactly why the Segway PTs have been valuable tools for us."

