

Tutorial: Parking Calls



In this tutorial you will learn how to track calls, without relying only on a classic queue structure. This is especially useful when calls are routed to specific people or groups during defined events.

We will discover how to use the parking lot tracking feature of QueueMetrics' Unloader, that can be used to track parked calls "as if" they were normal calls handled on a queue.

Parking Calls

The Happy Wombat Clinic is not a typical call center but is instead a famous animal clinic. There are two doctors in the clinic: Dr. Fatty and Dr. Erwin, and since they are both famous doctors, they receive a fairly large amount of phone calls from their patients. The doctors are not always immediately available though so, to manage this situation, Edna the receptionist needs a way to put the calls on hold while trying to contact the requested doctor. On top of that, the hospital management needs a simple way to track all the calls between doctors and their patients. If the

doctor is not available or if patients hang up before managing to contact the doctor, the hospital wants to call them back when the doctor is free.

This scenario reflects the need for a more light-weight structure to track calls, without relying only on queues. This can be useful when the calls are routed to specific people or groups only on specific occasions and not regularly.

In this tutorial we will take a look at how to use the parking lot tracking feature of Uniloader.

Uniloader can be used to track parked calls “as if” they were calls handled on a queue. Parked calls are in a sense very similar to calls in a queue, because:

- You can define one or more separate parking spaces in the PBX
- Calls are parked at some period in time, and are waiting since then.
- The caller might decide to hang up before the call is served

The big advantage is that you can:

- See those calls on the Real-time page of QueueMetrics
- Run a wallboard on them
- Run reports on them

Basically calls can be “parked” in what we will call a “parking lot”. This is not very different from a normal queue, the big difference is that, instead of the queue routing the call to the assigned agents, the agents retrieve the call from the parking lots manually. This is done by calling the parking slot where the call is parked. For example the parking lot can reserve 4 extension numbers starting at the extension number 401. This means that extensions 401, 402, 403, 404 are reserved to that specific parking lot. The parking lot also has an extension number used to park calls (400 in this case).

To set up a parking lot we need to take the following steps:

Create a normal queue in QueueMetrics with the name of your parking lot (e.g. “pk-default” for the default lot).

Queue Detail

Queue alias:	<input type="text" value="pk-default"/>	
Queue(s): <small>Separate with ' '</small>	<input type="text" value="pk-default"/>	
Visibility key:	<input type="text"/>	
Call flow:	<input type="text" value="Inbound calls"/>	
Shown on front page:	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>	
Chat group:	<input type="text"/>	
Default queue URL:	<input type="text"/>	
Main agents:	<input type="text"/>	
Wrap agents:	<input type="text"/>	
Spill agents:	<input type="text"/>	
Attention levels	Yellow alarm	Red alarm
Number of calls in queue:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of agents on call:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of agents waiting:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of agents paused:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Call wait duration:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Call talking duration:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Service Level Agreement:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	
WombatDialer settings		

Enable the parking lot on our PBX.

Parking Lot

Parking Lot Options

Parking Lot Extension:

Parking Lot Name:

Parking Lot Starting Position:

Number of Slots: (401-404)

Parking Timeout (seconds):

Parked Music Class:

BLF Capabilities:

Find Slot:

Returned Call Behavior

Make sure our Unitracker service is running with the parking lot tracking configuration enabled (ENABLEPARK=1). The configuration file is usually located at

/etc/sysconfig/unitracker

```
LOGFILE=/var/log/asterisk/unitracker.log
LOCKFILE=/var/lock/subsys/unitracker
PIDFILE=/var/run/unitracker.pid

AMIHOST=127.0.0.1
AMIPORT=5038
AMIUSER=admin
AMISECRET=password

#Uncomment to enable event logging
DEBUGFILE=/var/log/asterisk/unitracker_events.log

#Only MOH tracking is enabled by default
ENABLEMOH=1
ENABLEPARK=1
ENABLEOUTBOUND=1

OUTBOUNDTHRESHOLD=300
```

Now we are ready to test the parking lot feature. First we will call a normal inbound queue, where our receptionist (Agent/200) will answer.

Calls being processed:

Queue	Caller	Entered	IVR	Waiting	Duration	Agent	MOH	Srv
300	201	17:02:49	0:00	0:02	0:08	200		hvast1

Export as...

Agents currently logged in:

Agent	Last logon	Queue(s)	Extension	On pause	Srv	Free Since	On queue	Caller	Last call	IVR	Waiting	Duration
200	08/30 - 08:49:40	300, 301		-	hvast1	-	00 All	201	15:21:34	-	0:01	2:34


The receptionist will then park the call by transferring the call to the parking lot extension 400. This will park the call in the first available slot of our parking lot (401 in this case).

Calls being processed:

Queue	Caller	Entered	IVR	Waiting	Duration	Agent	MOH	Srv
pk-default	401#201	12:50:09	0:00	0:20	-			hvast1

The call should appear on the real-time page of QueueMetrics with its pick-up code as if it was a call on a queue. Now Edna can try contacting the doctor and, if the doctor is available, she tells them the correct parking slot code that she sees on the realtime page. To retrieve the call the doctor only needs to call the parking slot extension number (401).

Calls being processed:

	Queue	Caller	Entered	IVR	Waiting	Duration	Agent	MOH	Srv
	pk-default	401#201	12:51:31	0:00	0:12	0:08	200		hvast1 

As we can see Agent/200 retrieved the call by calling the extension 401.

When a doctor retrieves a call from the parking lot, he is automatically logged in as in a normal queue. This means that Edna can use all the conventional reports and metrics to track all the calls on the parking lot. All Edna needs to do is to launch the reports or the monitoring on the queue “pk-default” as if it was a normal queue. This way Edna is able to track all the calls, and is also able to see which patients hung up before talking to a doctor and is able to call them back.

The best thing about using the Parking lot feature is that is very simple to setup and use. Of course it’s usage is not only limited to a queue-less environment, but it can be used together with normal queues to enhance the flexibility of your system.

QueueMetrics References

For more information about QueueMetrics call center solution please refer to the [User Manual](#).

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