PARCEL LOCKERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A comprehensive vendor selection guide

INTRODUCTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, colleges and universities implemented policies and practices to accommodate social distancing and other health and safety measures. One change that has gained popularity is the addition of smart parcel lockers. They offer a contact-free, cost-effective, convenient, and automated solution for last-mile package delivery and pick-up. Following the pandemic, the value of parcel lockers on campus will continue to increase as institutions discover new uses for click-and-collect services for their communities.

Most parcel lockers on campus were introduced through mailrooms, where a recent survey indicated that the biggest challenge, coming in at over 46% of respondents, was the lack of space for storage, followed by not enough staff.[1] Both problems can be resolved with the addition of intelligent parcel lockers. 42% of the respondents to that survey have already invested in parcel locker solutions[2] and we suspect the rest of you are considering doing the same.

In an academic setting, smart parcel lockers can be leveraged beyond the mail center, which increases their value, and your ROI. They can be shared by departments and used for any exchange of assets, whether it's purchases from the bookstore, loans from the library, or hardware exchanges with IT. The applications are limitless—if your smart locker vendor can accommodate you. To ensure you select the right package management solution, it's important to ask the right questions. To find out what those questions are, read on.

SPECIAL.
DELIVERY.

[1] Spaces4learning attribute needed

[2] Ibid

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Understanding your campus' needs

Before you evaluate vendors, it's important to assess the needs of your institution. You don't want to be sold on features that are irrelevant to you, nor do you want a solution that doesn't address your specific requirements. To determine what's important to your school, you will want to consider the answers to these questions:

- ✓ What percentage of the student population lives on campus and off campus?
- ✓ Is the school located in an urban or rural setting?
- ✓ How far is the campus from a government post office?
- ✓ Are facilities for students centralized or decentralized?

Once you've mapped the campus, it's time to consider how you might use smart lockers.

In earlier days, students were assigned a mailbox, but it wasn't big enough for packages. Instead, staff left a note directing the recipient when and where to retrieve their package. The need for those mailboxes became obsolete, but the problem of distributing packages remained. With smart lockers, a message is sent to the recipient, and they can collect their package at any time of day or night, independent of the mail center's hours. That same model can be used outside of package deliveries, because intelligent parcel lockers are not just a place to deliver online shopping purchases and care boxes from the family.

For instance, the campus bookstore can be linked to parcel lockers. With a simple software API, existing solutions can be tweaked so people can order from the bookstore online and have it delivered to the parcel lockers.

University libraries can use parcel lockers in the same way, as a conduit between the student and staff to collect and return materials. Solution providers such as Parcel Pending by Quadient have software that connects directly with the library's back office to create a smart system that tracks the material being borrowed or returned.

Could your athletic department use a place for game attendees to securely store items that are not allowed inside the stadium or on the field? Perhaps the campus store wants to sell fanfare items on game day and deliver them directly to parcel lockers at the game for contactless customer collection?

This hands-off workflow can be used by any department on campus for faculty, staff, and student needs. The assortment of locker sizes means that items ranging from large IT equipment to important documents can be shared with ease.

So now you need to ask:

- ✅ Can the parcel locker integrate with other systems, such as library and bookstore software to create a robust, automated Campus Hub™?
- ✅ Does the software keep track of when an item has been dropped off or picked-up?
- ✅ Does the vendor offer internal tracking software to give you full visibility into the item's location at all times?

As noted, busy campus populations appreciate convenience, which is why they'll happily take to a self-service, contact-free solution that is available 24/7.

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Safety and security

When comparing intelligent parcel locker solutions, it's also important to understand how the lockers are constructed and how they work. Your campus community needs to feel confident that their packages and items are safe and secure for the installation to be a success. So, be sure to ask:

- ✔ Are the lockers theft-proof?
- ✔ Do they have built-in cameras?
- ✔ Do the lockers provide full chain-of-custody tracking?
- ✔ Are they weather-proof?
- ✔ How does the system notify someone when they have an item that needs to be retrieved?
- ✔ Are the lockers compatible with all delivery carriers?
- ✔ Do the lockers support a contactless workflow?

The way our parcel locker solutions work is simple. When there is a delivery, the recipient is instantly notified by text, email, or app. They can then pick up their package using the unique code provided in the delivery notification, or by using our mobile app. No one needs to sign for, sort, or distribute packages. It provides a safe and secure ecosystem.

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COVID-19'S IMPACT ON THE FUTURE
OF HIGER EDUCATION"

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Long-term ROI

Long-term value plays a big part in any decision to invest in new technology. With smart parcel lockers, the cost and the benefits can be shared. Departments can aggregate funds to pay for the services. With all the possible uses, no single entity has to support the cost of the entire parcel locker solution.

To explore the long-term value of the solution, be sure to ask:

- ✔ How will intelligent parcel lockers help boost staff and student satisfaction?
- ✔ How will parcel lockers help manage the continued growth of parcel deliveries?
- ✔ How much involvement will the mail center and other staff have once the lockers are installed?
- ✔ What are the anticipated cost savings?
- ✔ Does the vendor have customer testimonials, references, case studies, and success stories?
- ✔ Should the college or university charge fees to generate revenue to, for example, off-campus students?
- ✔ Is my university eligible for government funding or subsidies?

Compare other vendor's offerings against the key benefits of Parcel Pending by Quadient's lockers.

For example, our intelligent lockers are:

- ✔ *Weatherproof.* Durable lockers protect packages from sun, rain, wind, and snow
- ✔ *Accessible.* Multi-sized lockers accept most package sizes; easy accessibility supports any user
- ✔ *Versatile.* Multiple locker sizes to accommodate a variety of package dimensions
- ✔ *Contact-free.* Scan the barcode in the delivery notification or push a button in the mobile app
- ✔ *Mobile-friendly.* Receive delivery alerts, manage packages, and retrieve deliveries with your smartphone
- ✔ *Advanced.* Flexible APIs enable seamless integration with other software systems
- ✔ *Customizable.* Custom configurations, color choices, or wraps to match campus branding
- ✔ *Efficient.* Streamlined delivery processes; flexible solutions reduce space needed to accept deliveries
- ✔ *Carrier-agnostic.* Any delivery carrier can deliver to our parcel lockers

Customizable options

Intelligent parcel lockers are an investment for university campuses, their staff and students. They should be customizable to meet the campus' unique package management needs, aesthetics, logos, and culture. Make sure to ask any potential locker supplier if their lockers are customizable in color, design, and layout.

Wide section of locker sizes

Along the same lines, confirm the lockers can meet any indoor or outdoor space requirements and/or accommodate a wide range of package dimensions.

Parcel Pending by Quadient offers an extensive portfolio of intelligent locker solutions to meet each campus' unique package management needs. Whether your campus is large or small, centralized or decentralized, we'll create a customized solution to meet desired aesthetics and fit the space and package volume requirements as well.

Scalability and ease of installation

Ask any potential vendor if their locker solutions are scalable.

- ✅ Can additional lockers be added easily if needed?
- ✅ Will you have the ability to customize locker features, such as how long the recipient has to pick up their package?

Next, inquire about the installation process.

- ✅ Are they quick and easy to install?
- ✅ How long will it take to have the lockers installed and fully functional?

Parcel Pending by Quadient provides scalable, flexible locker system configurations, to ensure that each one provides a strong return on investment, while also meeting staff and student needs for locker access, convenience and security.

Integration and analytics

As discussed above, it is important that the supplier's parcel locker solution can easily integrate with campus software programs, as well as offer analytics so that staff can understand how the lockers are being used.

Universities that use Parcel Pending by Quadient parcel lockers have access to robust analytics and dashboards that provide instantaneous summaries that show how the lockers are being used and when stale packages or items need to be removed. They also track locker turnover and capacity. This information enables a seamless management experience for staff.

Hands-on customer support

When considering a locker vendor, be sure to consider how they'll support you as a customer. Is support available at the departmental level? What happens if the locker solutions need repairs?

Other questions to ask include:

- ✅ What happens if university staff have questions after the lockers are installed?
- ✅ Does the vendor have a dedicated customer service support team?

Parcel Pending by Quadient provides training for on-site associates on everything from installation to implementation as well as ongoing support, including maintenance for the locker systems.

Are Parcel Pending Lockers right for you?

Quadient is dedicated to helping university and college campuses of all sizes find the right locker solution to fit their package management needs. We partner with each university to ensure our smart lockers provide a unique experience, from planning and implementation to ongoing support.

Contact us at parcelpending.com/markets/university-parcel-lockers/

ABOUT PARCEL PENDING BY QUADIENT

Parcel Pending by Quadient is the leading provider of package management solutions for residential, commercial, retail, and university properties in the United States and Canada. With nearly 4 million packages successfully delivered monthly, we offer a wide range of solutions that ensure the simple and secure delivery and retrieval of packages and online orders. With the strength of our combined power, reach, and offerings, Parcel Pending by Quadient provides state-of-the-art solutions and world-class customer service to solve the last-mile delivery challenge.

**For more information about Parcel Pending by Quadient,
visit: parcelpending.com/markets/university-parcel-lockers**