

30 Minutes at the Automated Cashier Machine in a Parking Garage

Ellis-O'Farrell Garage, San Francisco

Sat. 06/10/2017

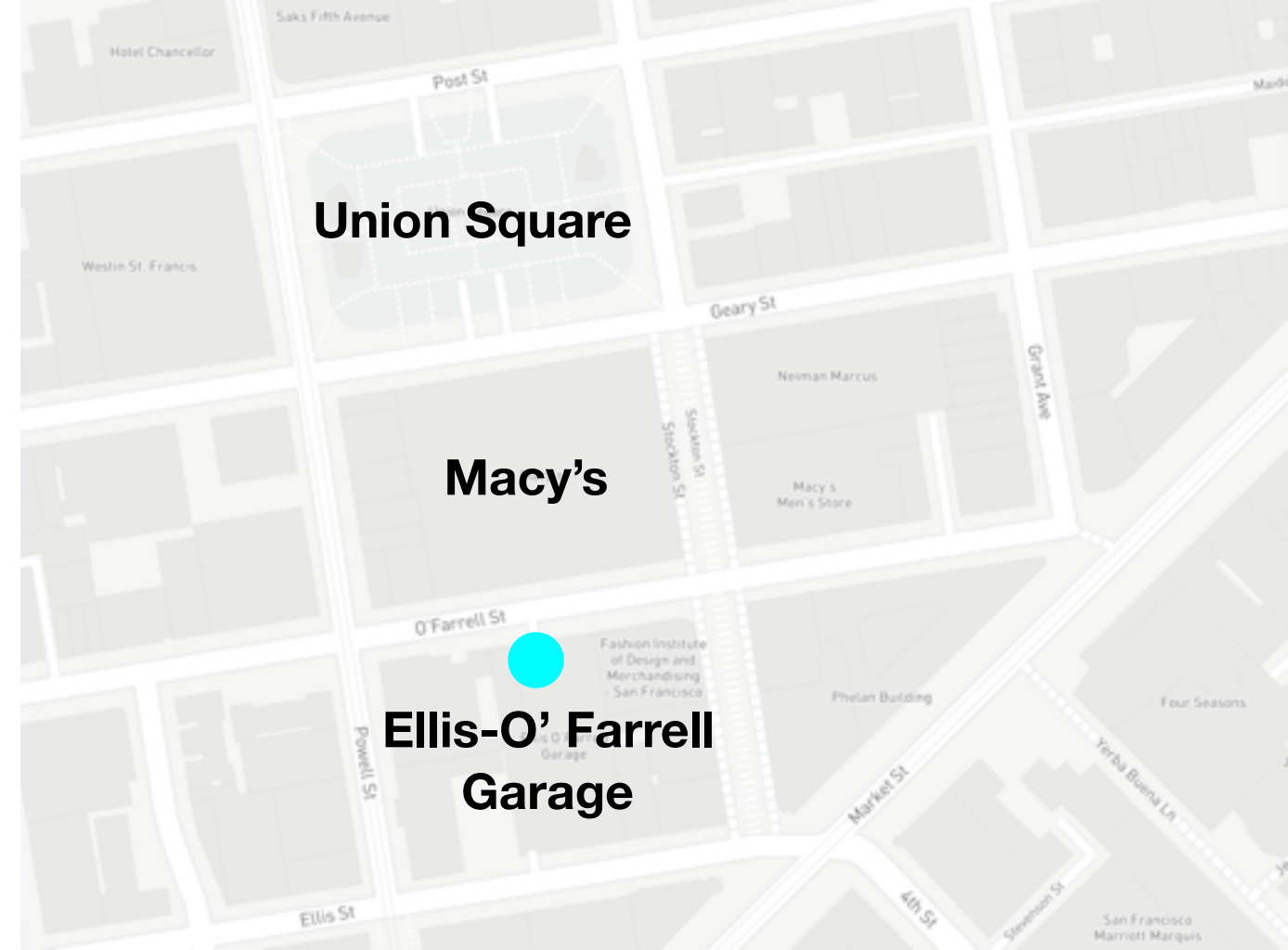
Yan Yan

All stories and statistics come from a 30-min observation.

Parking Lot:
Ellis-O'Farrell Garage

Location:
123 O'Farrell St, San Francisco

Time:
3:30-4:00pm Sat. 06/10/2017



Summary of Main Observations

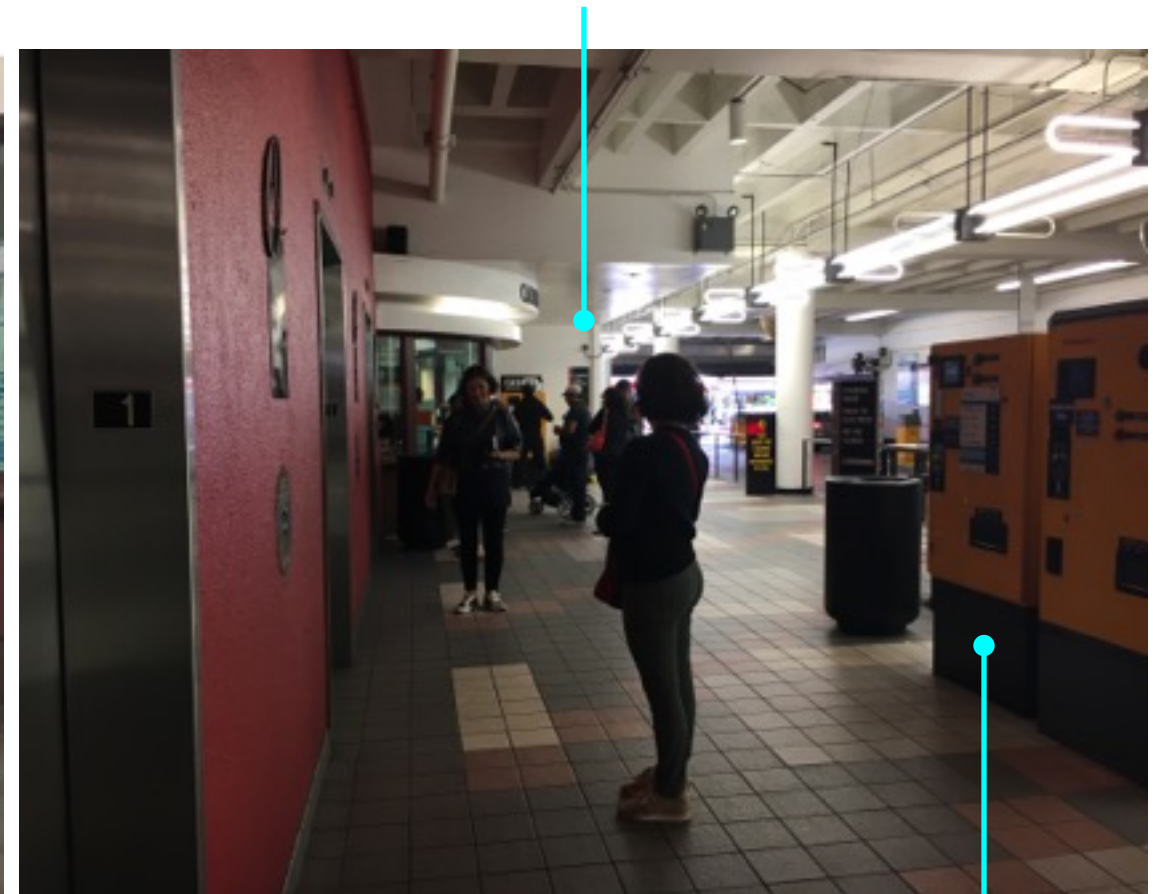
- More people tend to pay at the cashier instead of the automated cashier machine.

There was always a longer waiting line at the cashier than at the automated cashier machine.

Long line at Cashier



Long line at Cashier

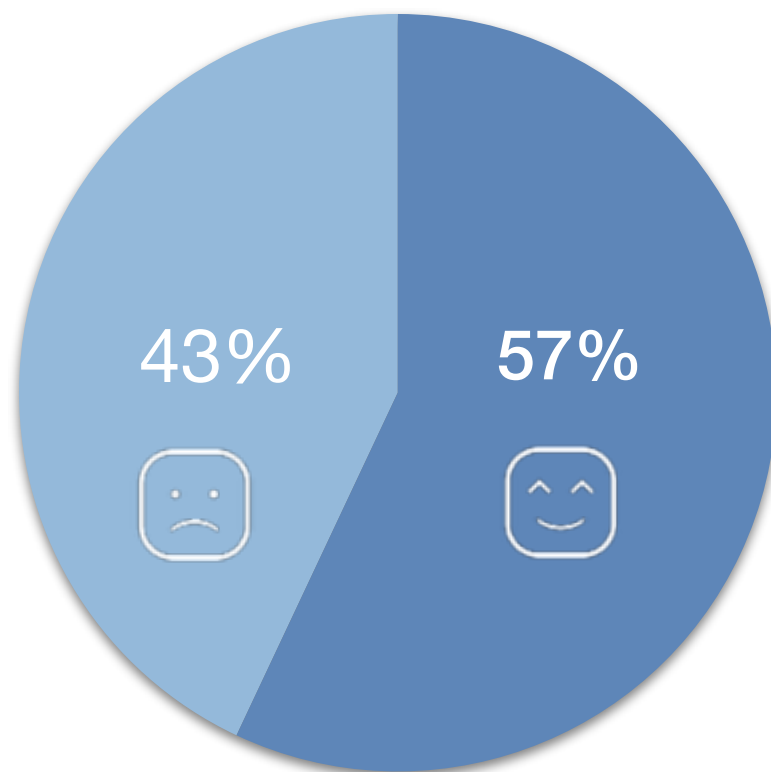


No one uses the automated cashier machine

- Many people failed to successfully make the payment using an automated cashier machine.

During 30 minutes,
21 people **tried** to pay at the automated cashier, but only **12** people **succeeded**.

This women **tried three machines, failed at all of them**, and then joined the line at the cashier.



- Most of those who successfully completed a payment did it quickly and smoothly.

During 30 minutes,

12 people **succeeded** to pay at the automated cashier machine,

and **8** of them completed the whole process **within one minute.**

Analysis

- Reasons for longer waiting line at the cashier

1. Don't know how to use the automated cashier machine / Don't want to risk the money and /or card.
2. The automated cashier machines are hidden behind the waiting line at the cashier, and the crowd waiting for elevators.
3. Seeing a long waiting line at the cashier but only few people using the machines, people tend to think that the machines are out of work or hard to use, and they don't want to bother trying to use them.

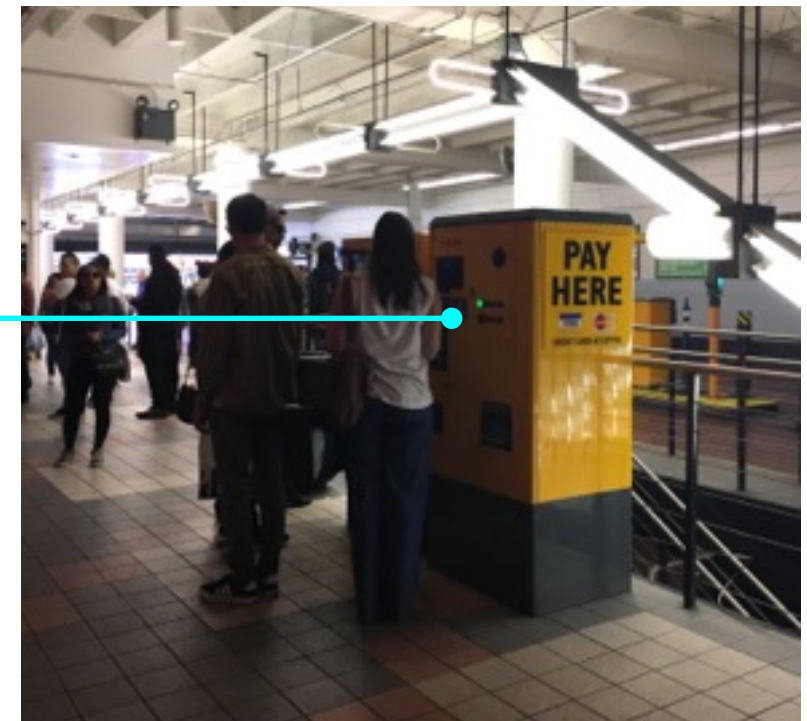


- Reasons for unsuccessful payments

- This is where the parking tickets should be inserted first, and then the credit card. But it says “credit card only”, makes it very confusing.

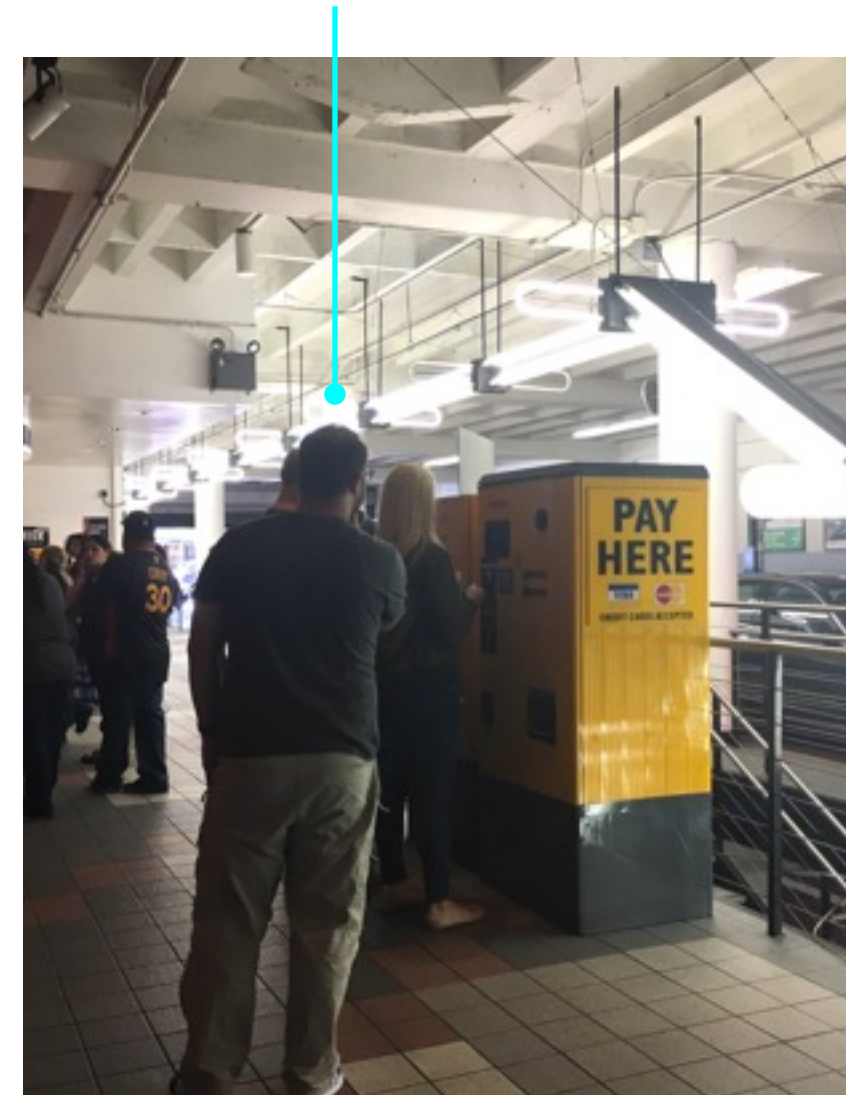
- Some people don't read this instruction. They don't separate the ticket. They insert the ticket into the machine along with a long piece of paper, and the machine does not recognize it.

- A **red light** (below the green light) flashes for about 5 seconds when a ticket is inserted. It makes some people panic and canceled the payment.



- Reasons for “polarization”
- Those who completed a payment quickly and smoothly might be frequent users of the automated cashier machine.
- Some people tried to use the machine but failed. They cannot get helpful information from the instruction, or find someone to help.
- Therefore, the former become more familiar with the machine every time they use it, while the latter always don't know how to use it.

- **This man tried the machine and failed.**
- **Then, he saw the woman paid with the machine successfully.**
- **He tried one more time, but failed again.**
- **He paid at the cashier finally.**



Solutions

Make the automated cashier machines more visible

- Use posts and retractable belts to organize the waiting line at the cashier. Make sure the line does not block the machines.
- Put signs at the cashier to direct people to the machine.

Improve the clarity of instructions on the machine

- Clearly number the steps people need to follow to complete a payment.
- Add a voice prompt system.
- Light the corresponding place where actions need to be taken at each step.

Provide ways to seek help

- Provide a phone number at a visible place on the machine that people can call to seek help.