



Kayla Keith shares a laugh with Learning Center director Sally Nold after Keith's presentation Oct. 2. Keith said Sedgwick County could take steps to make its tag offices more customer friendly.

## Part of the solution

By Matt Heilman  
Last Updated: October 04, 2012

### Student offers alternatives to long lines at the tag office

Kayla Keith had an audience of decision-makers. The teen mother who balances a full-time work and school schedule with raising her son, is taking one of her final projects out of the classroom and into the real world where she hopes to make a difference.

On Oct. 2, the 17-year-old senior, who is finishing her high school career at The Learning Center in Valley Center, stood before a crowd of professionals — including two Sedgwick County commissioners, Sedgwick County Treasurer Linda Kizzire, Valley Center school district Superintendent Cory Gibson and local media — to deliver a presentation she believes can make a difference statewide.

"We pride ourselves on giving students real-life, learning experiences," Teacher John Speer said before Keith's presentation.

Over the past few weeks, Keith has conducted research on how to increase efficiencies at the Sedgwick County tag offices, where waiting periods seem to get longer as each month progresses and patience is at a premium.

Keith has observed how business is done at the tag office during its busiest times and consulted business professionals who weighed in on how practical measures taken by companies could translate into shorter waiting time at the tag office.

"Complaining gets you nowhere," she said.

The title of Keith's Oct. 2 presentation was "Be Part of the Solution, Not the Problem."

After discussing the problem at the tag office with Speer, Keith said she went home and brainstormed some ideas to prepare the presentation that is giving her credit in her speech, English and government classes.

The senior began her presentation by introducing the problem. At the tag office, there's not enough of a focus on customer satisfaction, she said.

To help ease the burden on county employees at the tag office and to cut

down on the frustration level of customers, Keith introduced a couple of solutions that she believes can be implemented effectively.

The first solution she offered is to implement a call-ahead option, similar to making a reservation at a sit-down restaurant. Mitch Hauber, managing partner with the Texas Roadhouse restaurant chain in Wichita, spoke of how practices at his restaurant might work effectively at the tag office.

He said call-ahead seating has been offered at Texas Roadhouse for about eight years. By putting together the best estimates on how many diners can be expected at different times and how long they take to finish a meal at the restaurant, Hauber said he's figured that diners can expect about one minute of waiting time for every name on the list to be seated. On a typical Saturday evening, it's not uncommon for the waiting time to reach 90 minutes.

With the call-ahead option, diners can reserve their place on the list and get an estimate on how long of a wait they can expect.

"It gives customers freedom and flexibility to wait at home or get other stuff done instead of waiting at the restaurant," Hauber said.

He said a call-ahead option used at the tag office could improve the morale of customers and county employees.

County Commissioner Tim Norton pointed out that customers have a lot of dining options. If they don't like the wait at Texas Roadhouse, they can eat at home or go to another restaurant, but there's no alternative to the Sedgwick County tag offices.

To take the reservation strategy a step farther in the convenience department, Keith next yielded the floor to Chris Prew, a software developer whose company has developed an Internet check-in system for the Great Clips chain of hair salons.

The check-in system, which works on computers and mobile phones, allows a customer to type in his or her name and phone number to reserve an appointment. Customers can find Great Clips locations nearest to them and see how long of a wait they can expect.

On Oct. 2, Prew spoke via Skype during Keith's presentation. He said the waiting times in his system are factored through an algorithm that has estimated about how long employees at Great Clips take to work on a typical client.

At the tag office, Prew said an algorithm could be developed to estimate wait times with a fair degree of accuracy by assuming that most customers visit the office to renew their tags and recording an average of how long such transactions take.

Keith said implementing an Internet-based check in option for the tag office could be accomplished at an affordable cost to the county and is an option she believes could be used effectively statewide. She said crowds at the tag office could also be more evenly spread out throughout the month if people didn't dread the visit so much and put it off until the end of the month.

"The system should fix itself," Keith said.

On behalf of Sedgwick County, Kizzire said she was pleasantly surprised with how well Keith presented her ideas.

She said a system is in place in Johnson County where tag office customers can enter their cell phone information to receive information on how long of a wait they can expect. She said the state is waiting to see how that program works.

She said there would be a few hurdles to clear before Keith's ideas could be implemented, but she liked what she heard.

"I thought they were very good," Kizzire said.

Speer said he thinks Keith has the solution to increase the efficiency at the tag office.

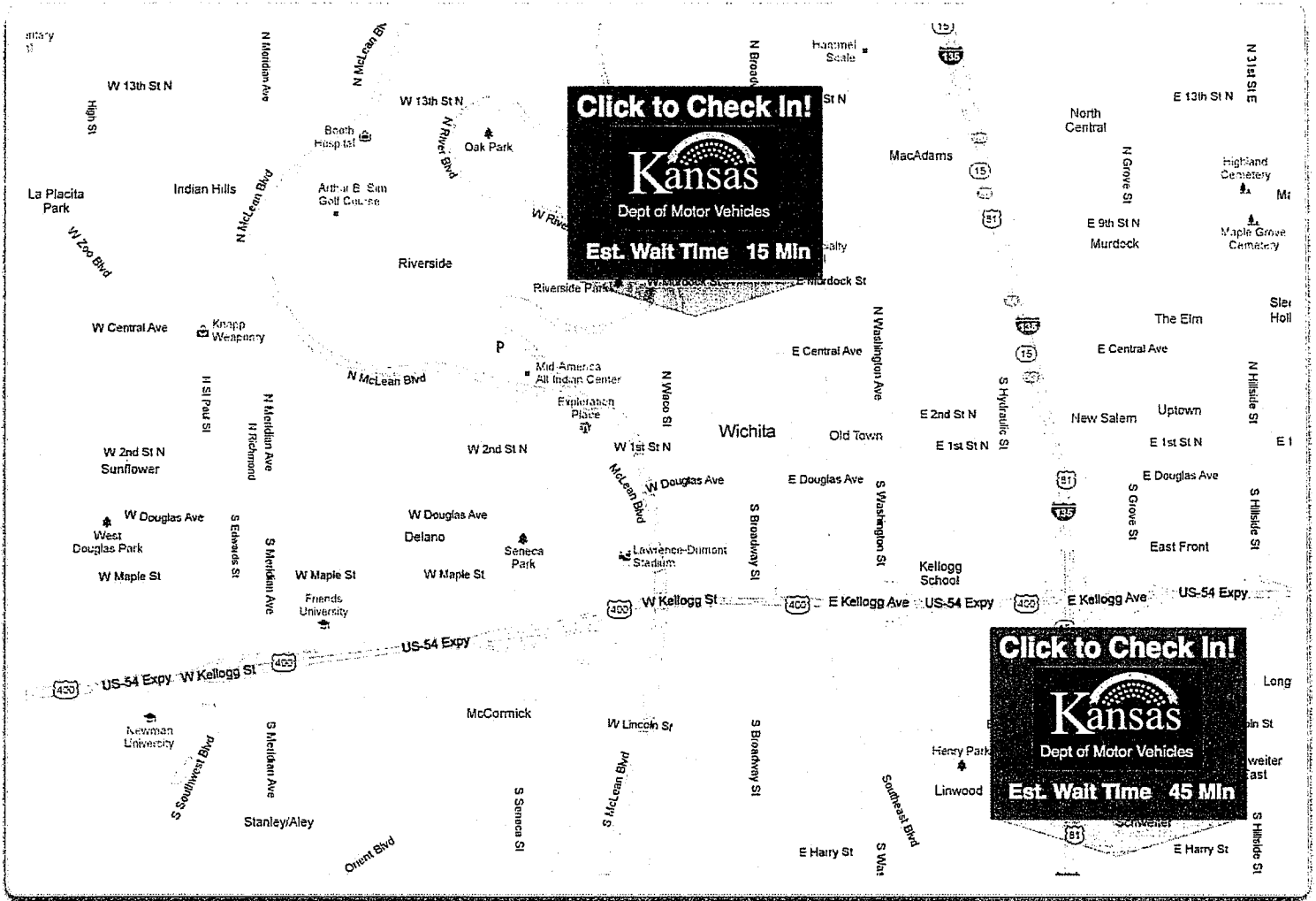
"I think one of the things that's important is to not forget that some of our younger people are the ones that are going to solve the next generation of problems," he said.

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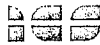
# Net Check In™

Transforming how the world waits™



ICS developed and patented the technology, ICS Net Check In™, to reduce and eliminate the need for customers to wait in offices and service centers.

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# Net Check In

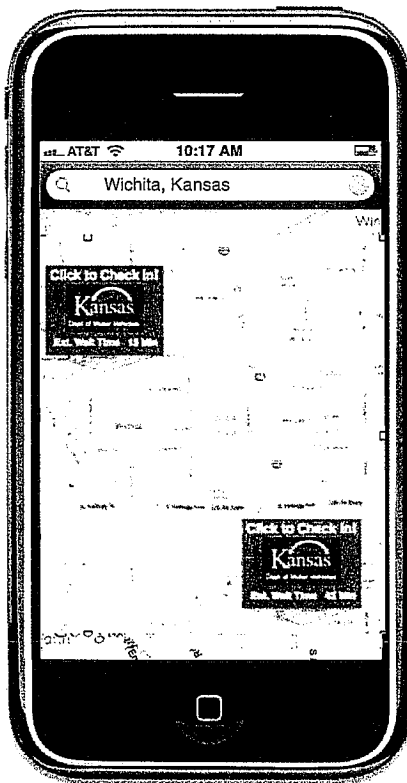
How it works

Imagine never having to subject yourself to long waits in the service center, the doctors office, the automobile repair center or any business that has a line or queue as part of its process.

Let your name wait for you, while you do more important things.

Net Check In is an internet based application that allows the end user to:

- View the estimated wait times for a group of related service centers on a map.
- Touch the service center that best meets your needs.
- Check into the service center remotely via the map.



Your individual wait time is constantly updated and displayed on the map to let you know when your time to be served is getting close.

With Net Check In, waiting around will be a thing of the past.

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# Net Check In™

National Press Attention



By **Bruce Horowitz**, USA TODAY  
Updated 5/31/2011 2:33 PM

"Mobile technology is affecting walk-in businesses in big, big ways," she says.

**"The technology is leapfrogging."**

Even into the hair salon.

In a move bound to shake up the hair care industry, Great Clips, one of the nation's largest hair care chains, this week will announce plans to roll out an app that gives customers a place in line before they reach any of its 3,000 stores.

**"We believe it's a game-changer," says Steve Hockett, Great Clips operations vice president.**

While the app doesn't technically book an appointment time, it puts your name up on the virtual board so that when you walk in the door, you're ahead of anyone who walked in or used the app after you.

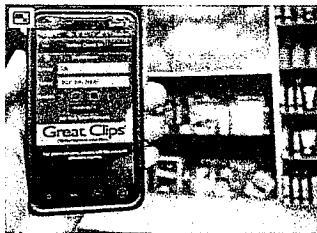


Photo of Great Clips with the right app can book their place in line at Great Clips

## The New York Times

By JOHN GROSSMANN  
Published: June 15, 2011

### Connecting With Clients Through the Power of Tech

That is the intention at Great Clips, the nationwide chain of hair salons. "The No. 1 reason we lose customers is because we make them wait," said Tim Lawless, who owns Great Clips franchises in Indiana and southern Michigan. "That's also the No. 2 and No. 3 reason."

**The Net Check In option now being introduced at the Great Clips Web site, which allows customers to enter their ZIP codes through a computer or smartphone, checks the current wait times at nearby Great Clips outlets and lets customers choose the optimum location.**

"It's playing in Peoria," said David Hands, who with his wife, Tanja, owns seven Great Clips locations in Peoria and the Bloomington/Normal area of Illinois, where walk-in customers have typically waited eight to 15 minutes for a cut.

**A recent cyber check-in, "a young guy on the go," walked through the door, sat down and told Mr. Hands, "Thanks for giving me 10 minutes back to my life."**

Only two months after introduction, Mr. Hands said, he is averaging 10 remote check-ins per outlet a day — about 10 percent of his business.

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# Net Check In

Testimonials

## Net Check In End Users

Awesome App! ★★★★★

*"It's so easy to use and so simple! This is awesome!!!!"*

Great App! ★★★★★

*"This app is great because it's so convenient. I love that I can schedule ahead of time so I don't have to wait."*

## Net Check In Customers

*"ICS did a fantastic job of developing Net Check-In."*

*Not only does Net Check-In give our customers more freedom, it does it in a way that our competitors can't. Thanks to ICS for this great innovation!"*

*Peter Aronson, Franchisee, Spokane & Portland*

*"I just put it on my iPad. It's **AWESOME!** Thanks to ICS, we are on top of technology."*

*Rita Hutchins, Franchisee, Chicago*

*"We love the Ray Kroc quote from McDonald's, 'When the competition is drowning, shove the garden hose down their throat.' **Net Check-In is our garden hose!**"*

*Rhoda Olsen, CEO, Great Clips*

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