

## Mall to show off automated car park

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ABU DHABI // A multi-storey automated car park with space for 765 vehicles at one of Dubai's most popular malls will be shown this week during a three-day parking symposium.

The completed structure adjacent to Ibn Battuta Mall – to be shown off to dignitaries this week – will open once roads in the area are finished.

It is one of several robotic car parks being built to address the UAE's parking space shortage.

There are several types of mechanical car parks, but they usually involve motorists leaving their cars on platforms, which then move the cars on trolleys that slot them into spaces stacked vertically.



The automated car park. Paulo Vecina / The National

The buildings, which can hold more vehicles than conventional multi-storey car parks, solve the problem of space, said Sami Issa, general manager of Robotic Parking Systems.

"In Abu Dhabi, where the city is already built, very limited land is available and there is a big parking shortage, we can build a very efficient facility."

Eight companies from the automated parking industry are expected to attend the symposium at Abu Dhabi's Beach Rotana Hotel.

"A large number of companies have approached us and are telling us about projects that they have under way, that they are keeping under wraps," said Davyd Farrell, the event's organiser. "That indicates to me that, coupled with the property boom in the UAE and in the GCC as well, automatic parking is a viable solution and one that is being embraced to combat parking problems."

Mr Issa said his company has three other projects either under construction or in the planning stages, including one at the Emirates Financial Towers in Dubai that will hold 1,200 cars, and a structure at a hotel to be built in Abu Dhabi.

Another company, Sharjah-based East and West Robotics, which built a small car park near Dubai two years ago, said it would soon install a car park to hold 200 vehicles at a residential building in Sharjah.

Abu Dhabi's parking management programme will also be under discussion at the symposium, with government officials expected to attend. It is the first event dedicated to the parking industry in the Middle East.

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