Taxi apps – opportunities and challenges

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This is the IRU
Evolution of IRU Membership

1948: eight founder countries

2014: 170 Members in 75 countries

...and CRIPA: 27 Members + FESARTA in 38 countries
IRU Taxi Group Main Current Dossiers

- Level playing field with self-proclaimed “ride-sharing” for reward transport platforms
- Global Taxi Service Quality Network (GTN)
- Adapted to the taxi industry access to profession rules
- Road safety and wearing of safety belts
- Driver training (Taxistars)
- “Taxi – Anytime, Anywhere” campaign
Taxi – Anytime, Anywhere!

• 24/7 availability, with customised door-to-door service
• Safe travel with professional drivers
• Green today, greener tomorrow with the comfort and accessibility that customers want!
The apps revolution – our current priority
Main Issues

- Drivers not licensed
  - Amateurs drivers
  - No proper background criminal check
  - No proper training
  - Tax avoidance

- Problems with vehicle safety and inspection

- Problems with insurance and liability
Main Issues (cont’d)

• Problems for customers with disabilities, disadvantaged areas and social groups

• Problems with price setting

• Essentially commercial activity, yet payment is a suggested donation
October 01, 2014

Level playing field essential for future competitive taxi innovation

Innovation in Europe’s taxi industry and recent challenges faced from so called ride-sharing apps highlighted to newly-elected MEPs, Belgian politicians and industry stakeholders by IRU, which welcomes new technologies, but stresses that fair competition and clear regulations are essential.

Brussels – Presenting innovation in Europe’s taxi industry and recent challenges faced from so called ride-sharing apps to newly-elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) at a reception last week, the International Road Transport Union (IRU) highlighted that new technologies are indeed welcome, but stressed that fair competition and clear regulations are essential.

IRU Head of Passenger Transport, Greg Kamberis, stated, “Customers clearly want smartphone taxi services and we welcome this innovation and use of new technology by the legitimate taxi industry. However, political leaders and decision-makers must ensure that regulations guaranteeing safety, security and high-quality taxi services for customers are respected. We welcome fair competition, but fairness should not mean allowing some market players to do as they wish, while subjecting others to strict rules at the same time.”

Vice President of the European Parliament, Olli Rehn, commented, “Politicians need to make sure that the rules are clear for all. The taxi industry has the keys to its future in its pocket. On behalf of the European Parliament, let us work together for cleaner, greener, more comfortable taxi services in Europe.”

The taxi industry further called for a level playing field and for all market operators to play by the same rules and raised some safety, insurance and tax avoidance concerns relating to so called ride-sharing apps, to various European political representatives, notably the newly-appointed Brussels Capital Region Minister for Transport, Pascal Smet.

Mr Smet said, “We must ensure that vehicles are insured, technically safe, that the driver is physically and mentally fit and that customers do not pay too much. This has resulted in “big” regulation. I would like to reduce regulation and still meet the same objectives. I’m in favour of car-sharing, but under certain conditions. It should not compete with traditional taxis.”
Taxis - for a level playing field

to support innovation and ensure quality of service to customers and competitiveness of the public transport chain anytime, anywhere

European Taxis and Hire Cars with Driver Trade Associations, Members of the IRU,

- Committed to support the organised taxi industry’s efforts to constantly improve the quality, attractiveness, safety, environment-friendliness and accessibility of its services, including by further increasing the professionalism of its managers and drivers, and by intensifying the exchange of best practices among all taxi professionals in order to benefit customers across Europe;

- Sharing the common objective to promote high quality and safe services to customers by making use of the latest technology related to smartphone applications for taxi, in full compliance with the regulatory framework, including by launching a Global Taxi Service Quality Network, with the objective to provide citizens, businesses and booking platforms with a one-stop shop solution to help them ordering legal and safe taxi services anytime, anywhere in the world;

- Emphasising the sheer fact that over recent years it was the regulated taxi and hire cars with driver business which has been leading smartphone applications’ implementation, by pioneering the implementation of new digital technologies and business models, thus contributing to seamless citizens door-to-door mobility and the efficiency and competitiveness of the public mobility chain in Europe, offering a 24-hour/365-day availability
Taxis are part of public transport…

… probably the most innovative part
The IRU’s approach

- Rules exist for a reason and must be obeyed by all
- Rules and Court decisions must be enforced
The IRU’s approach

In Europe – European Commission must give a clear signal – adapted access to profession rules
The Global Taxi Service Quality Network (GTN)

A network of taxi industry federations and taxi apps. Partners certified by the federations as meeting a list of pre-defined GTN quality criteria.
What is GTN?

Members
Taxi trade associations

Partners
Taxi smartphone app providers
What is the GTN objective?

To promote the organised taxi industry leadership…

... in ensuring high quality and safe services to customers…

... by making use of modern technology (apps)…

... in full respect of the regulatory framework

Global roaming area where customers use their local taxi app anytime & anywhere in the world
Any taxi smartphone application service provider is entitled to apply to become a GTN Partner.

To be eligible, the app must meet a pre-defined set of GTN service quality conditions, and the service provider must sign the GTN’s Service Quality Commitment Charter.
Where are we today?

3 Partners
14 countries / 150 cities
Beginning of networking eCab and Taxi.eu
Where we shall be Dec 2015?

- 10-15 apps
- 20-30 countries
- 1 or 2 continents
- 300+ cities
- Advanced networking
IRU Academy: Worldwide Excellence in Road Transport Training

International Network of IRU Academy Accredited Training Institutes (ATIs)
TAXIstars project: Modules structures

- Driver’s well-being
- Ergonomics
- Getting too comfortable (≈ defensive driving)
- Emergency case management
- Personal safety
- Service orientation and social interaction
- Conflict management and dealing with problematic passengers
- Eco-driving
Taxi – Anytime, Anywhere!