Uber Technologies Inc.: Calling a cab for the Taxi Industry?

Description: Introduction

This case study examines the rise of taxi apps, in particular that of Californian company Uber Technologies Inc. It assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the new service, and scenarios which present both opportunities and threats.

Features and benefits

- Analysis of how technology has disrupted industry in the past and how it is currently doing so in the taxi operator industry.
- Detailing what Uber is, how it has grown so strongly and what its future plans are.
- Evaluating the threats to the company and how it has responded to them.

Highlights

The proliferation of smart phones has presented an opportunity for innovation across the economy. This has been extended to personal transportation, where a number of apps have been established, including Uber. Since 2009, Uber has grown to serve over 100 cities across three continents, with a pre-money valuation of $17bn in July 2014.

Uber possesses many significant advantages. Its cost structure is significantly cheaper than that of traditional taxi operators, and demand for the company's app appears to be insatiable from both customers and investors. It has strong growth prospects in cities across the globe and presents an innovative product that consumers appreciate.

Uber's cavalier attitude towards legal status and in expansion has drawn closer scrutiny. Elsewhere, there are elements of the industry which seek to make itself as accessible as Uber via technology, and other competitors (such as Lyft) also represent a threat to the company’s success.

Your key questions answered

- How have smartphones changed the taxi industry?
- What is Uber?
- How has Uber grown so strongly?
- What problems will Uber face in the future?

Contents:

OVERVIEW
  Catalyst
  Summary
THE RISE OF RIDE APPS AND UBER
  The app economy
  How technology can disrupt an industry
  The taxi industry is being disrupted by technology
  Uber was originally a luxury vehicle hire service
  Uber expanded its services to include cheaper cars for hire
  How Uber works
UBER'S STRENGTHS
  Uber has significant financial advantages over taxi firms
  Uber appeals to a broad range of consumers
  Uber improves taxi service for both customers and drivers
  Uber's disruptive tactics are paying dividends
  Strong investor interest vindicates current plan

Uber's pre-money valuation is higher than some public companies

Should demand hold, a potential Uber IPO could be very profitable
Uber could see further use as a promotional tool
Uber's product expansions are well received
Uber Rush: new product demonstrates Uber's versatility

THREATS TO UBER’S EXPANSION
Uber's legality has been questioned
Uber’s aggressive strategy could backfire

Failure to vet staff could lose Uber customers and cost more

Uber's aggression towards new entrants could escalate the problem
The competitive landscape is adapting to Uber
Uber faces ridesharing competitors, particularly Lyft

Uber vs. Lyft: the battle for drivers
Scissor pull of driver/consumer incentives is unsustainable

Uber CEO hints at a potential solution in automated cars

CONCLUSIONS
Uber could be a dominant force for decades

APPENDIX
Sources
Further Reading
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