Qminder

Ridesharing and Queue Management

Today, the world exists in what some call the **experience economy.** More than ever before, success depends on being able to offer an experience that is unique and more attractive than that of your competition.

On-demand startups, especially those of ridesharing variety, pride themselves on offering this premium experience package. What many of them have also figured out is that the driver experience is as important as the satisfaction of customers — perhaps even more so.

That's why their websites are peppered with phrases like "fostering the sense of community", "building an inclusive environment", and "people-first approach".

When it comes to leveraging experiences, no part is too small or insignificant.

In this whitepaper, we are going to explain how premium driver onboarding and support experience can mutually benefit e-hail companies and their drivers.

With over 10 years of experience helping ridesharing businesses make their support processes butter-smooth, we've seen these benefits first-hand.

It's time to move the driver experience from the backseat to behind the driving wheel.

Ridesharing and service experiences

There are many reasons why ride-hailing took the world by storm. But essentially, it could be attributed to companies following the old mother's wisdom of "Don't get into strangers' cars."

Armed with ridesharing apps, both passengers and drivers can know exactly who they're riding with, and rate their experience accordingly.

It's the convenience of this experience that stands behind the success of ride-hailing moguls. On 24 July 2018, Uber announced it has completed 10 billion trips worldwide, doubling the number of trips in just one year.

Overall, **the ridesharing market is expected to reach 209.6 billion USD by 2026** — up from its 2020's valuation of 73.07 billion USD. Other reports go for an even bigger number: 230 billion USD by 2026.

While the US and Europe were the original drivers (pardon the pun) of this growth, this is no longer the case.

The ridesharing boom is especially rapid in Asia-Pacific and Latin America, where inadequate public transportation coupled with the increase in population demands for affordable and efficient mobility.

Asia-Pacific alone captured a major share of the global ride-hailing market — **43.83%**.

These regions became a fertile ground for new ridesharing apps, such as **Ola** in India, **DiDi** in China, **Grab** in Singapore, **Cabify** in Latin and South America, and many more.

All of these emerging on-demand ride service providers have found success that is comparable to the original transport disruptors like Uber and Lyft.

To wit, the ridesharing company 99 became Brazil's first so-called unicorn, i.e. a startup valued at over 1 billion USD.

But success does come at a price. As the company grows, its internal issues scale up as well. They continue to rely on outdated processes that slow down their operations.

No matter the region, at the center of any ride-hailing business is its drivers. With the abundance of new apps to work as contractors for, they can pick and choose which company is more deserving of their skills.

When Qminder was first brought over to help with driver onboarding at one of key ridesharing providers, it quickly became apparent that we can help with more than just check-in and registration.

The entire support system impacts the driver experience. Every day, drivers apply for support on insurance, rental, simple enquiries, or technical maintenance.

E-hail companies want to save time and money, but the focus should be on sparing their driver applicants the hassle of solving issues.

The impact of COVID-19 on ridership rates

Ridesharing businesses were among the first ones to feel the impact of COVID-19. As coronavirus cases spiked across the world and people were discouraged from leaving homes, companies started to lose a significant portion of their ridership.

Combined, Uber and Lyft lost $8.5 billion in 2020 alone. While the first months of 2021 are looking better, both companies are still far from profitable.

Surprisingly, the demand for trips is finally growing, but neither company has the resources to accommodate it. There is another pandemic at their hands — a driver shortage problem.

Reportedly, US-based drivers for both apps are down by 40%.

"In 2021, there are more riders requesting trips than there are drivers available to give them." - **Dennis Cinnelli**, Uber's vice president for mobility in the US and Canada.

As vaccination rates continue to go up, so does the number of potential customers. The question is, which company drivers and riders are going to take their business to?

Uber and Lyft are now announcing, among other benefits, multi-million dollar stimulus packages for drivers to incentivize their return to the apps. Once again, experience is what dictates the success of ride-hailing companies in attracting new labor.

But now that everybody has lived through the lockdown, there are more parts to that experience than simple monetary gains or convenience. People want a sense of safety that goes beyond mere platitudes.

This, too, starts at the very beginning — driver onboarding and support.
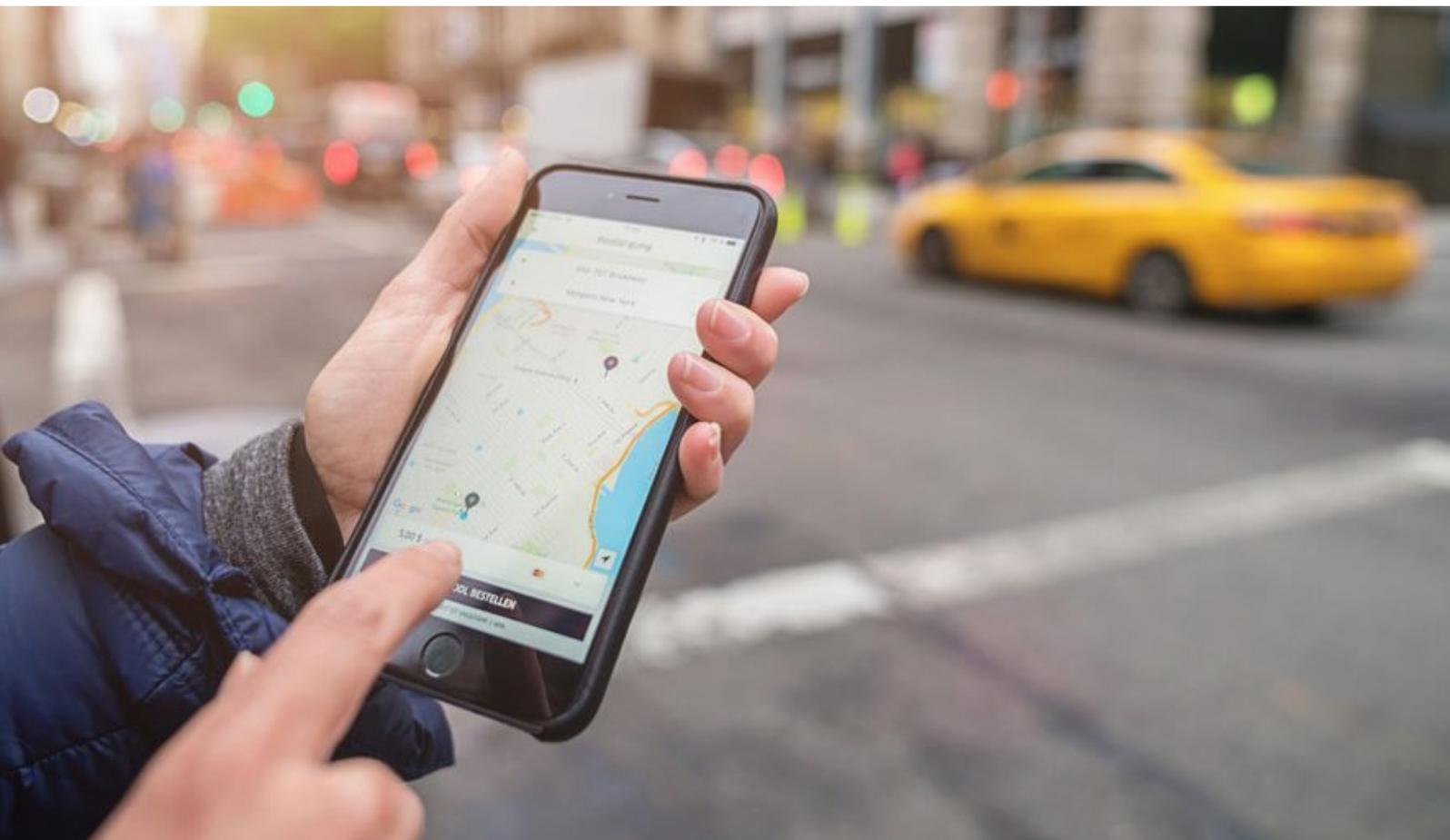
How drivers benefit from queue management

"Qminder helps us serve our drivers — the cornerstone of the Lyft community — in a human and personal way. Visitors to our Hubs feel welcome and attended to, and leave happy, just as they deserve to be."

Dana Hooshman, Former Head of Operations at Lyft

For prospective drivers, registration itself is rarely a problem. But when they do run into issues with payments, insurance, screening, technical difficulties or other things, they want a quick response from the support team.

The frustration of one driver not getting an answer in time will quickly spread to other driver contractors. Even the ridesharing giants can't always get their processes right; for the smaller players in the industry this is something they want to get on top of ASAP.

Smart guidance

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"In 2021, there are more riders requesting trips than there are drivers available to give them." - Dennis Cinnelli, Uber's vice president for mobility in the US and Canada. (Source)

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Safe, contactless sign-up

Ridesharing companies put an extra emphasis on the safety of their drivers and customers. Nothing would illustrate this better than employing the same safety guidelines to the process of driver sign-up.

A touch-free queuing process allows drivers to join the virtual queue from the comfort of their homes or cars, and only enter the premises when required to. This helps manage drivers' count at the location, lowering the risk of contagion, and make the experience headache-free.

Multilingual support

Driving may be a universal language, but it is more comfortable to drivers when everything is explained to them in their native tongue.

Characteristically, registration and onboarding are the parts where people get the most questions: What should I do? Where do I need to go? Who do I talk to?

This is especially difficult if English is not their first language, which is often the case for multilingual communities. To help them with the check-in process, a queuing system can be configured to display in different languages.

This serves two purposes at once:

1. Makes it less likely for prospective drivers to make mistakes when filling out the application.

2. Gives it a more personal feeling and psychologically puts drivers at ease.

Queue management supporting clerks

"Having over 650,000 driver partners demands a smart solution that helps us ensure the best service at our centers. With Qminder, we are able to significantly optimize our driver partner operations."

Sumit Tuteja, Supply Product Head at Ola

Service agents are the first point of contact for driver partners. This makes agents effectively the face of your ridesharing business.

Using a queue management system helps you decide whether this face will look tired or not.

Quick throughput

The core benefit of a queue management system for clerks is that they get to quickly sign up new drivers and verify their information. The service flow's breakdown into smaller segments helps tremendously speed up the process.

By automating the parts of the journey that ought to be automated — updating the waiting list, calling up the next driver, notifying them of any delays — a queuing system helps service agents concentrate on providing the premium service.

The importance of serving quickly is hard to overstate. The tolerance of people for waiting is notoriously low across all industries, e.g. six minutes in retail.

With all other factors equal, long waiting makes drivers rate the overall experience low. Meeting their criteria for fast service is how ridesharing companies maintain the image of a driver-friendly business.

One of our clients' internal guidelines stipulated a promise of service within 15 minutes. This was a number they came up with that they consistently compared their results to, to determine what's working and what isn't.

Smart labeling

A digital queuing environment has other benefits, too.

With a complex sign-up routine, there can be instances of prospective drivers making a mistake and joining the wrong queue — say, applying for a new rental instead of getting insurance support.

In that case, clerks get to forward a driver partner to another queue with just a few clicks, from their dashboard.

To help the agent operating this other queue in serving the driver, employees can collaborate with each other through smart labeling. By assigning visitors specific labels which delineate certain nuances (language used, priority queuing, medical assistance required), service agents can anticipate the driver's needs before they make themselves known.

Instant feedback

As the saying goes, you can only improve what you can measure. Honest feedback from driver partners can help evaluate the service strategy's effectiveness and pinpoint its weaker areas.

Thus, a good service flow must always end with a post-service feedback. A digital visitor management solution that takes advantage of two-way communication makes it easier than ever, by letting you send an SMS with a survey link.

When drivers get to share their honest sentiments, fresh from interactions with your staff, managers can rely on this feedback to course-correct the sign-up experience.

Queue management helping managers

"Qminder has helped us understand our customers better. It is a great tool to gather data and translate it into how we can improve our operations. I don't know how we even managed to survive without Qminder."

Angelica Guido, Customer Support Team Lead at Bolt

Managers usually focus on the bigger picture. They need to know how well the location they've been put in charge of is performing, and whether the strategy they've picked is the right one.

Queue management software gives them the data to back all of the decisions. It helps drive operational efficiency, optimize the operations and, ultimately, reduce the costs of driver acquisition.

Employee productivity

A queuing solution helps visualize, dissect and analyze individual and team-based performance to identify trends and evaluate each employee's progress.

Gathering data at every stage of the driver's customer journey informs and improves every decision your business makes — from staffing to scheduling, to training. One of the more critical stats is the volume of visitors which can be segmented by:

- The type of interaction (served / no show / cancelled)
- Reason for visit

The further analytics help compare these numbers to a specific period, such as last week or month. This makes it easier to spot trends and anticipate needs.

Qminder offers breakdown by departments and agents, highlighting key metrics to pay attention to: the number of visitors served, average handling time, and total service time.

The response/resolution rate and the quality of interactions influence all other satisfaction metrics, such as CSAT and NPS. These are important service benchmarks that help companies stay consistent and understand which strategies are most effective.

Robust integrations

The best experiences are the sum of many parts, and no single tool can take care of them all.

By allowing third-party integrations, digital queue software makes it possible to synchronize and harmonize existing tools. Instead of migrating your entire data ecosystem, you can simply connect different tools and let them collaborate through APIs.

This way, web-based queuing systems help generate more comprehensive, up-to-date insights that your business needs.

Custom branding

Branding is the first impression your company will have on a prospect driver. It is your chance to express your values, mission and purpose.

Even something as simple as a check-in kiosk can help you get your vision across. With a digital queuing tool, it is easy to modify the look and feel of your waiting area — from the font and background colors of kiosks to displaying your logo on every monitor.

How ViaVan enables fast driver onboarding

There's only so much that could be explained on paper, without the context of real life. So let's take a closer look at how one of ride-hailing service providers is leveraging Qminder to offer first-grade driver experience.

Founded in 2017 as a joint venture between Mercedes-Benz Vans and Via, ViaVan began with a simple mission: **to make it easier for riders to get around the city, share rides and, ultimately, cut down on emissions**.

Via is an on-demand shared ride service that picks up multiple passengers heading in the same direction.

To get to your destination with ViaVan, you:

- Book a ride using a ViaVan app
- Get picked up at a nearby corner
- Drop off near the requested destination

Even with multiple pickups, trips are short and can be shared between multiple people.

Fueling driver partner engagement

Before Qminder, ViaVan used a customized Google Form for their driver partners to sign in. The process involved a lot of unnecessary manual work for both drivers and employees.

There were also other, more critical limitations of such a setup:

- Lack of integration with the driver database
- Lack of ability to identify the reason for a driver partner's visit
- No way to guide and keep drivers informed about the details of their visit
- No way to accurately measure visitor time or agent performance

Since the ViaVan team has always had a "drivers come first" approach, this set them on a mission for a better visit experience for their driver partners.

Accelerating digital queuing

ViaVan realized the need for a powerful tool that could boost their response times s well as scale with growth. They found such a tool in Qminder.

As a digital queue management system, Qminder allowed ViaVan for the level of flexibility that the standard queuing platforms cannot deliver.

From the get-go, linking Qminder to the driver database made it possible to nstantly merge the frontend and backend, without any manual input from agents.

ViaVan's driver onboarding setup

A driver visiting ViaVan's HUB is greeted by a check-in desk immediately at the entrance. A driver center agent welcomes the driver and makes sure that they sign in using an iPad at the desk.

There are two lines to join: one for new driver partners who wish to sign up to ViaVan's platform, and another for current drivers who want to resolve a range of questions.

Once signed in, a driver partner is directed to the waiting area. Each of the four service desks in the waiting area are assigned a number. When the driver's turn is up, they are shown which desk to advance to on the lobby screen.

Thanks to Qminder gathering visitor info upon sign-in, the agent already has the driver's details opened on his screen. This helps remove all possible bottlenecks and further optimize the speed of service.

If the driver is newly partnered with ViaVan, they will also attend a training video session in another room.

This simple flow has helped to significantly cut down on visit times as well as capture valuable data. The insights gathered with Qminder help ViaVan identify potential areas for growth, and drive efficiency through agent performance metrics.

Built-in reporting tools are invaluable when it comes to making your service faster and better. After all, **you can't improve what you don't measure**.

"Being able to link to our Driver Partner database, have individual profiles for agents, track visitors in real-time, and view data insights instantly – was everything we were looking for in a queue management system."

Dean Tucker, Operational Manager at ViaVan

Qminder has helped ViaVan to tighten both their visitor and onboarding flows while severely reducing visit times.

The fact that the new system achieved all that without the need for comprehensive training for staff shows how digital tools reshape the retail landscape.

We welcome new partners

Qminder is a queue management service provider with a global footprint.

Over the years, we at Qminder have partnered with ridesharing providers from five different continents. Together with them, we diligently work to enhance driver journeys and have come to learn

No other queue management system has been tested as rigorously nor received as high accolades from ridesharing companies. When a new partner from the ride-hailing industry wishes for a smooth rollout at dozens of different locations, it comes as easy to us as breathing.

Partnering with Qminder combines the advantages of the latest industry insights and robust support system. With a team dedicated solely to our partners' success, we want to prove by our example that great experiences benefit all.

Let's pave the way to better journeys, together!