Uber - Associate Product Manager Case Study

Problem:

Uber is everyone's private driver and it has revolutionized the way people move around. One can order a ride with two taps of a button and a car will be waiting or you within 10 minutes. This ease and quick service is the primary reason for Uber's meteoric success and has brought into picture a peculiar use case of the service that Uber was never intended for.

For instance, across the US, parents of children aged 13 – 18 are using Uber to ferry their kids around from school to soccer practice to piano lessons across town. Uber has been especially useful to single parents, who have the precarious task of balancing their own work schedules and their kids' schedules and Uber has provided smooth way for them to ease this task. Multiple articles have been published in various leading newspapers; recently, on this new use case that highlight the fear that's associated with having your kid move around the city with a complete stranger and the lack of alternatives that address these use cases.

Another instance of a completely different usage of the service is that customers are using it to schedule rides for their old parents and grand parents to take them to their medical appointments. Yet another instance of a non – traditional use case is scheduling rides for your inebriated friends, that stay on the other side of town, after a hard night of partying.

All these instances point to the difficulty in arranging transportation for your loved ones and the associated fear and apprehensions that the customers have to endure due to an inefficient process.

I propose to address this and create a product feature that helps such existing customers, better use Uber's services for scheduling rides for others, be it their friends, children or grandparents and be assured of their safety.

Opportunity Analysis:

It has been established that there is a need for a service that enables people ferry their loved ones via a safe and comfortable mode of transportation around town about their daily schedule. This presents a unique avenue for Uber to expand into as the company operates in this exact market space. SWOT analysis can be applied to evaluate the lucrativeness of the opportunity.

1. Strengths:
    a. The proposed service requires transportation facilities and Uber has an existing driver – passenger network and standard ride ordering mechanisms, which eliminate setup costs for the company. It also reduces acclimatization efforts for the customers as they are already using the service.

b. The company brand name has done wonders and Uber is synonymous with easy, efficient and cost effective means of transportation and there is general goodwill amongst customers toward the company that can be leveraged to the launch of the service that requires customer trust primarily because riders with special needs (kids and seniors) are involved.

2. Weakness:
    a. The customer segment for such a service is specific to the use-case and the monetary status of the service user.
    b. There are currently small fragmented players in this service who are just starting out. Thus, the company loses the early bird advantage, however the current market share that the company enjoys can offset this setback.

3. Opportunities:
    a. The service requires a mechanism that enables Schedulers to easily schedule rides in the future, for Riders. Uber has the required technology infrastructure under use.
    b. Slight modifications to the technology infrastructure will be required to integrate support for this service.

4. Threats:
    a. There is existing completion in the market space that may reduce market share.
    b. There is a low threat to entry of new competitors. Current taxi fleets have the transport infrastructure and scheduling technology to quickly enter this market.
    c. Apprehension of customers to the credibility of Uber drivers and trusting stranger's ferry their loved ones around town are always present.
    d. Marginally high costs of service that might be incurred in contrast to the

User Personas:

The personas can be divided into 3 roles for the service:

1. Scheduler: A person who sets up the ride requests in the future for someone else.
    a. *Qualities*: primarily concerned about safety of loved ones, unable to perform pick-up/drop-off chores, Wants loved ones to have a safe and comfortable ride, wants current information about the whereabouts of the loved ones while in a ride.

2. Rider: A person who is scheduled to ride in the service.
    a. *Qualities:* requires adult supervision and accessibilities, belongs to age groups 13 – 18 or 65-80, need to move about town for multiple activities.

3. Drivers: The regular uber drivers.
    a. *Qualities:* friendly, customer service competent, responsible

Use Cases:
The use cases are straightforward:

1. Allow schedulers to schedule rides in future to ferry their children.
2. Allow for senior citizens to be ferried to medical appointments and other places easily via someone else such as a helper or offspring.
3. Allow for scheduling of rides for your friends.

Product Features:
Based on the different roles of the user personas, the following features can constitute to the new service:

- Scheduler
  1. As a scheduler, I can schedule a ride at a particular date, time in the future and the person the ride is scheduled for.
  2. As a scheduler, I can schedule these future rides to be recurring or one time and view them in a calendar.
  3. As a scheduler, I should be able to enter pickup and destination address.
  4. As a scheduler, I should receive a notification to confirm my future ride, 10 minutes before the actual ride begins and verify the pickup/drop-off addresses.
  5. As a scheduler, I should be able to see the driver's credentials and contact information.
  6. As a scheduler, I should be able to specify any accessibility requirements and/or special instructions that the driver must observe while making the pickup/drop-off.
  7. As a scheduler, I should receive a notification when the scheduled car has arrived at the pickup destination.
  8. As a scheduler, I should be notified when the pickup has been made, ie, when the rider scans the QR code.
  9. As a scheduler, I should be able to track the ride on a map.
  10. As a scheduler, I should receive a notification when the drop-off is made.
  11. As a scheduler there should be a way for me to ensure that my child is picked-up by the right driver by way of a secret, known only to the driver, my child and me.
  12. As a scheduler, only I should have the ability to enter payment information and modify it.

- Rider:
  1. As a rider, I should receive a notification/text containing details about the car, the driver credentials and ETA of the driver when a ride is scheduled for me.
  2. As a rider, I should receive a notification/text when the car has arrived.
  3. As a rider I receive Texts when my ride starts/ends that I can reply to to let my scheduler know that I have boarded/alighted into/from the ride.
     (Texts enable coverage of all types of phone-smart and feature and as senior citizens are more likely to use feature phones, texts are advantageous over other methods.)

- Drivers:

    1. As a driver, I have the same experience of picking up a regular call.
    2. As a driver, I should receive the special instructions/accessibility requirements once I accept the call.

The above features can be further prioritized and implemented using current component systems of the Uber app.

Wireframes:

The wireframes attached in a separate are created using Balsamiq and indicate the basic screen flows for the service.

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