BlaBlaCar’s main strategic advantage and point of differentiation has been its ability to circumvent the laws and regulations designed to hamstring its competitors such as Uber. Instead of offering a ride-share inside the city like the main players in the industry, BlaBlaCar has instead focused on offering an inter-city ride-share which has so far allowed it to grow, attract investors and expand into internationally.

A 3-prong Strategy

To offset indirect competitors such as Uber, BlaBlaCar should keep the intercity rideshare model as its main focus and work on expanding and carefully monetizing the intercity offerings through strategic partnerships with big-name companies and offering a greater selection of services. Most importantly, BlaBlaCar should keep its revenue-sharing model in which drivers do not profit off riders to avoid the hurdles Uber is facing in many markets.

The existing service can be monetized by expanding the corporate platform offerings targeting mid-large firms (through corporate/social events and limited time special deals) in existing markets, an assertive partnership/acquisition program to acquire key assets/talent and expand its offering as well as aggressive marketing campaigns

BlaBlacar should continue to look for partnership/acquisition opportunities in new and existing markets as part of the existing strategy. Partnerships and acquisitions will allow BlaBlaCar to ultimately acquire key assets and talent at a lesser cost, and expand its pool of services, and further differentiate itself from competitors.

Finally, in markets in which intercity travel is modest (such as the US), BlaBlaCar can enter the market easiest by partnering with (or acquiring companies like TURO) adapting the business model to include P2P car rentals, in which owners can rent their vehicles for a short period to verified subscribers.

Short-Term Goals

* Expand corporate platform offerings, targeting mid-large firms
* Partnerships with European transit (Eurorail for instance) – attract new customer base with travel deals
* Aggressive marketing campaigns

Mid-Term Goals

* Expand product offerings to include ideas like *seasonal* package deliveries (*at first*) or partnerships with big name retailers to deliver goods
* Expand services to new markets in Asia/India/Australia

Long-Term Goals

* Move into new markets by adapting the business model into P2P car rentals
* Aggressive marketing campaigns to educate customers/partners about the P2P service
* Expended partnership with big retailers for goods delivery
* Partnerships with public transit in other markets to increase its appeal to customers

3-prong Implementation

As a key part of the EU market and a country in the midst of some transition, BlaBlaCar’s French base of operation is a blessing in disguise. As a central travel hub in western Europe, economically well-off France was well placed to originate the inter-city ride-share model and export it to neighbors. Per Frederic Mazella, France’s criticism heavy yet entrepreneurially evolving culture is allowing new ideas to slowly flourish. Moreover, Europe (and France’s central place in it) is rife with partnership opportunities for increasing inter-city/country travel and P2P rideshare.

In the midst of aggressive growth, the key aspects BlaBlaCar will need to focus on as it carries on the implementation of the 3-prong strategy are risks and resistance, power networks, structure and communication.

Risks and Resistance

Due to the 3-prong strategy being so heavily depended on acquisitions/partnerships and service diversification in the age of globalism, there are several critical risks that must be considered:

* New acquisitions not fully integrating into BlaBlaCar structure and strategy

This can be mitigated by sound internal to insure new partners and team members become acclimated to BlaBlaCar culture and become knowledgeable about the strategy and its implementation.

* Partnerships with intercity public transit (such as Euro-Rail) leading to losses due to inner resistance and lack of interest

Careful strategy analysis and vetting of partners and opportunities as well as aggressive marketing can minimize this risk. Aggressive internal communication about programs will also abate the risk.

* Customers/partner fear about goods/package delivery

Aggressive marketing and education campaigns and partnership cooperation to incentivize customers will highlight the benefits and further differentiate BlaBlaCar from its competitors. Starting the program as a seasonal offering during holidays will mitigate some of the costs.

Power Networks

Due to the nature of the industry and the emphasis on partnerships and acquisitions, informal networks will be a crucial block in the implementations of the strategy and the retention of talent.

Information and ideas generated through Informal and power networks from new partners and acquisitions can be key to successfully designing the new marketing campaigns as well as understanding and growing new and existing markets.

Informal networks will be particularly beneficial in retaining talent resulting from mergers and acquisitions, as trust and loyalty in BlaBlacar can be carefully cultivated through these networks.

Structure

Because of the very nature of the P2P industry and ride-sharing, and the strategy’s reliance on acquisitions and partnerships with big name companies, BlaBlaCar should have a flat, de-centralized structure. This will give upper echelon managers in different markets the latitude to grow the business as best suits their markets. A de-centralized structure helps to rapidly transition new acquisitions and partnerships into existing teams, supports highly cross-functional teams, as well as giving all employees a greater voice (leading to greater idea flow).

Communication