**UBER’S DIGITAL MARKETING TACTICS**

1. **Early Adopter Advocacy:** Word of mouth marketing has been essential for Uber’s marketing strategy. The way the company initially fostered it was by seeking out Silicon Valley movers and shakers and getting them to advocate for the brand. While many techies are constantly looking for new products and services that transform their ways of life, Uber also took aim at them by [sponsoring events](https://growthhackers.com/growth-studies/uber), giving first-time riders a free trial, and adopting a hyper-local strategy that changes shape with each new city the company enters.

**2. Referrals**: Early adopters have since been able to take advantage of Uber’s referral program to give friends free rides, while earning credits themselves. This give money-get money program gave first-timers a more concrete reason to try the service. It’s been massively successful both for Uber and for certain super-fans, one of whom earned over [$50,000 in referral credits](http://elitedaily.com/news/technology/new-york-man-loses-50000-uber-referral-credits-posting-bad-review/). Drivers also get referral incentives, thereby making acquisition on both the customer and “contractor” sides faster and easier.

To this day, referrals are an integral part of Uber’s marketing strategy. It’s not surprising, as word of mouth is an ages-old marketing technique that works across essentially all industries. When a company implements referral software, suddenly these effective yet opaque communications become visible. They can incentivize advocates and first-time users, scale their marketing, and pinpoint what’s working and what isn’t.

**3. Reviews:**One massive differentiator between Uber and traditional taxis is that the transportation disruptor has [rating systems for both drivers and passengers](http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2015/07/18/423549092/what-does-your-uber-driver-think-of-you). Drivers are probably more motivated by their ratings, since passengers can’t easily find out where they stand. Either way, the system promotes trust in Uber and better behavior on the parts of both driver and passenger. A certain amount of uncertainty (or dread) about how chatty or inebriated one’s travel buddy will be is thereby eliminated, making everything a little smoother for everyone.

**4. Stunts:**Every time Uber launches a new special offer, groups of millennials around the world cheer. Sometimes the service [delivers kittens](http://digiday.com/platforms/uber-marketing/) to offices and other times it lets passengers ride with famous musicians like Diplo or Matt & Kim. These exciting “surprise and delight” tactics work to please loyal customers, generate positive buzz, and give Uber a more fun and friendly image, which is something it often lacks [in comparison to its competitor Lyft](http://www.forbes.com/sites/ellenhuet/2015/01/27/lyft-branding-makeover/#4786736a4598).

**5. Partnerships**: Uber has implemented a number of [partnerships](http://www.psfk.com/2016/01/uber-spotify-ubereats-seamless-complementary-partnerships-future-of-retail-2016.html)to entice both first-time and loyal customers to take a ride. Certain [Capital One credit card](http://www.cnbc.com/2015/04/21/uber-and-capital-one-announce-partnership.html) holders can get discounted rides, [Starwood Hotels](https://newsroom.uber.com/revving-up-rider-rewards-with-starwood-hotels/) Preferred Guest members can earn hotel points for every Uber trip they take, and [Spotify](https://newsroom.uber.com/uber-spotify-music-for-your-ride/) users can link their profile to their Uber account to play their music while they ride. While the Capital One and Starwood Hotels partnerships give those customers a financial incentive to ride, the Spotify alliance is just a fun add-on for users coming home from the bars. All of these partnerships, though, give more legitimacy to the gargantuan startup.

**6. A Loyalty Program**: Not many consumers know it, but Uber’s marketing strategy has included a loyalty program for at least about two years now. “Uber VIP” is exclusive to those who are *actually* loyal – customers who’ve taken over 100 Uber rides. It seems like the main tangible benefit of the program is that VIPs have special access to the highest-rated drivers. However, the program also signifies a commitment to and a gratitude for these returning customers, who surely feel slightly proud of the fact that they’re “very important.”

**7. An Omni-Channel Approach**: The most crucial aspect of Uber’s marketing strategy *and*its product itself is its seamless, multi-channel nature. In an excellent Growth Hackers post, Sean Ellis, Everette Taylor, and Dylan la Com note that “Uber set out to [reimagine the entire [taxi] experience](https://growthhackers.com/growth-studies/uber) to make it seamless and enjoyable across the board. They didn’t fix one aspect of the system (e.g. mobile payments for the existing taxi infrastructure), they tackled the whole experience from mobile hailing, seamless payments, better cars, to no tips and driver ratings.” The product is tapped into customers’ lives in a wholly revolutionary way compared to the old method of hailing or dialing a cab.

The omni-channel tactics don’t even stop there. Uber has recently partnered with [Facebook Messenger](http://newsroom.fb.com/news/2015/12/introducing-transportation-on-messenger/) to let users request rides from within the messaging app. In certain cities, the company has set up [physical kiosks with breathalyzers,](http://www.digitaltrends.com/cool-tech/uber-breathalyzer-kiosk-offers-a-free-ride-home/) which will hail a ride for bar patrons who’ve had a little too much that night. There’s even an Uber [mobile game](https://salt.agency/blog/ubers-marketing/)! At the same time that Uber extends its presence to other channels, it’s also striving to fulfill more consumer needs on its own platform. [UberEATS](https://ubereats.com/eats/la/" \t "_top)is the company’s rapid food delivery service and standalone app. [UberRUSH](https://rush.uber.com/how-it-works" \t "_top), meanwhile, is a business to business delivery service that’s already partnered with Shopify, Bigcommerce, and Clover. [UberHEALTH](http://mobihealthnews.com/48727/with-slew-of-partnerships-uber-rolls-up-to-healthcare-space" \t "_top)has begun to deliver flu shots, and [UberEVENTS](http://techexec.com.au/ubers-finishing-innovative-year-by-opening-up-its-api/" \t "_top)is working its way into the wedding industry by letting event hosts prearrange and prepay for transport for their guests.