

Upstart: Designing for Collective Governance in Gig Work

Ali Alkhatib, Albert Feng, Michael Bernstein
{ali.alkhatib, alfeng6, msb}@cs.stanford.edu

Digitally mediated gig work has grown significantly in the past decade with the popularization of markets like Uber, Lyft, and Amazon Mechanical Turk.

While workers have been frustrated by these systems, they remain largely disempowered to affect these systems or their policies.

We consider the viability of collectively governed labor markets, and built a system that its users — gig workers — would run together.

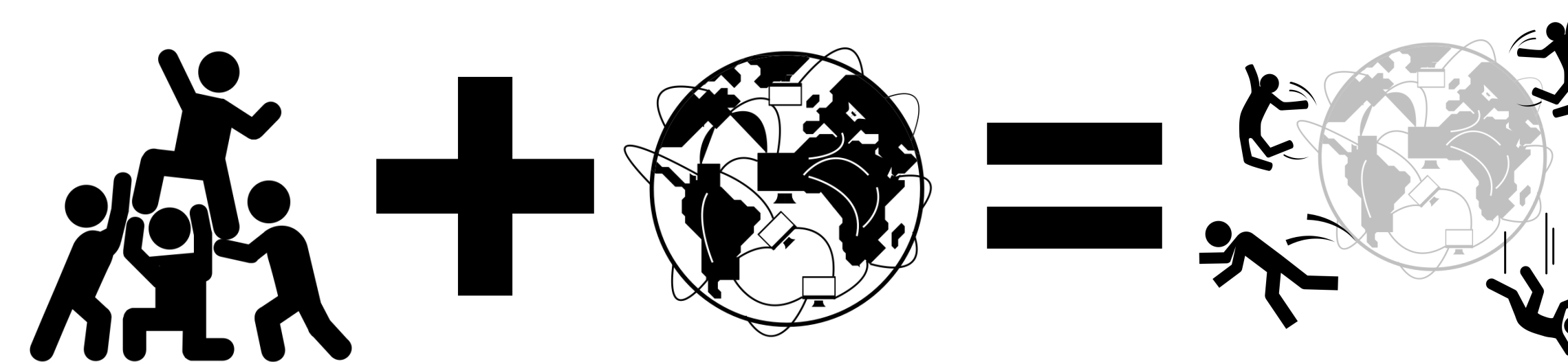
The Problem

Workers have tried to improve their own circumstances



Why is this hard?

Online labor markets are dispersed, and the markets don't build opportunities for workers into the system



The Insight

Worker cooperatives, where workers own and run the company, build opportunities for empowerment into the system

The Vision

Building a labor market with tools that workers can benefit from (managing availability, scheduling, communication)

<some visual about scheduling/calendars>

This system allows workers to decide policies and agree

<some visual about voting/democracy>

If they want to fork it, that's cool too

<some visual about git/forking>

Collaborators

Started at Microsoft Research FUSE