

GoMyWay on the benefits of ridesharing

By  Lauren Hartzenberg

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We know that efficient public transport remains a bugbear in many Africa countries; but we also know that challenges tend to be the greatest drivers of innovation. Nigerian ridesharing platform [GoMyWay](#) is evidence of this.

Funded by investors including tech heavyweights; Konga's CEO, Sim Shagaya, CcHub and ex-Amazon executive, Bill Paladino; the platform connects passengers with car owners travelling the same route, with a focus on intra-city as well as inter-city commutes. Damilola Teidi is the founder and front-woman of the startup and she let us in on some of Nigeria's transport challenges and how GoMyWay endeavours to fix them.



Damilola Teidi

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What inspired the creation of GoMyWay?

There's a need for a more efficient transport system that is cost affordable, effective, safe and convenient. We identified this need and we were inspired to find a solution that meets this need. Entrepreneurs like myself understand that we have a role to play in finding solutions to the real problems that exist in our environment (this might include other neighbouring countries). At GoMyWay, we say "we are building the new African rail network...on roads!" and we believe it.

Describe Nigeria's transport ecosystem at the moment...

The majority of commuters in Nigeria make their trips by road. For shorter commutes, the options are 'danfos' (mini buses with a capacity of about 10 to 15 people), tricycles and local taxis, which in many cases are inconvenient. For long distance trips, many (including car owners) turn to the privately-owned buses.

A lot of these transport options are privately-owned. There's a notable lack of government-owned transport especially in the provision of a mass transit transport system such as railway and large passenger capacity buses. Some states are making improvements with respect to large buses but there's more work to be done on a larger scale.

There's also no effective railway system which clearly is a problem as there are undeniable benefits of a good rail system in a country as large as ours. Over the years, the passenger and freight traffic has declined by approximately 89%. There's one functional line from Kano to Lagos which takes about 40 hours. This leaves a lot of pressure on the roads.

Also, due to these issues and also poor city planning to accommodate the growing urbanisation rate, major cities are plagued with traffic congestion that is a cause for concern as the people living in these areas spend a considerable amount of time on the road getting from point A to point B. When compared to the population size, the transport system in Nigeria can be said to be inefficient. The good news is that there are solutions.

What are the benefits of ridesharing?

The benefits meet the need to create a more efficient transport system that is cost affordable, effective, safe and convenient.

- It makes transportation affordable for both car owners and passengers. Even with the recent fuel price increase in Nigeria, car owners and passengers can save a lot by ridesharing. For passengers, the fares are almost the same price as the bus or in some cases, cheaper. For the car owner, he/she is able to cover part or all of the fuel cost.
- It is more convenient than public transportation.

- It helps to reduce the traffic congestion found in major cities like Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt.
- By reducing the number of cars on the road, it also promotes a cleaner environment.



■ ***What makes the GoMyWay platform unique?***

- As I mentioned earlier, GoMyWay offers a convenient yet affordable mode of transportation that is not being affected by external factors such as the recent hike in fuel price.
- The platform is accessible nationwide and has ride offers across different cities in the country.
- It can be used for both interstate trips as well as daily commutes to work/home.
- The platform has built-in functions geared towards building a trusted ride share community.
- We have a team that is dedicated to making this work and a culture that puts the community (our members) first.

■ ***How does GoMyWay ensure the safety of commuters using the platform?***

Presently, we have a four-level verification process that consists of valid government ID, phone number, email, and Facebook ID verification. Each user's level of verification is made public to other members of the community. We also eliminate anonymity so no one hides under this to commit crimes. Each user is expected to create a profile that allows other members to get to know them before sharing a ride. In addition to these, we have a ratings/reviews system where members who have shared a ride together can rate each other. These reviews are also visible to other members.

■ ***What are your expansion plans, if any?***

We have plans to launch GoMyWay in some other African countries in the near future. The decision to expand to other African countries is based on the premise that there are other countries that have similar problems and can benefit from ridesharing.

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