Disruption through the on-demand economy

Disruptive technologies, such as Airbnb and Uber, are changing the way business is done through the on-demand economy, which is the immediate real-time provision of goods and services by companies, using smart technologies. Consumers have embraced this trend with unprecedented frequency.

Heino Gehle

The increase in the number of smartphone connected consumers, simple and secure purchase flows, and location-based services are a few of the market conditions and technological innovations that propel the explosion in on-demand services. Customers have choice with an on-demand economy and rapidly changing technology is changing the way we do business forever.

The always on, always connected revolution has made convenience, efficiency, and simplicity critical ingredients in purchasing decisions — never before has a consumer been able to buy anything they want at any time with the simple tap of a button.

Despite the relative youth of on-demand businesses, it is expanding at a rapid pace. Supply is driven via an efficient, intuitive digital mesh layered on top of existing infrastructure networks.

Is it then as simple as developing an app to put your business 'online'? "Not at all," says Heino Gehle, GM of PLP SA. "Consumers are not interested in downloading 150 different apps to perform different tasks. Today's on-demand market leaders have created successful business models, which can satisfy the needs of consumers in a far more scalable and efficient manner than before. They have managed to combine a host of services and goods into one simple platform.

“Take Uber, for example. This on-demand car service is doubling revenue every six months, putting the company above $3bn gross in 2015. Uber’s current revenue in San Francisco is larger than the entire San Francisco taxi and limo industry revenue. However, the interesting thing is, Uber still has a significant opportunity for growth, as it is building a digital mesh, combining other services and goods into their platform. Put this ‘mesh’ in everyone's pocket and you are building an empire.”

For companies to be competitive in this market, it is essential to collaborate with complementary, non-competitive businesses to provide added value to your customers. These range from cross-promotions to close partnerships. Creating a memorable, frictionless user interface is equally important to provide greater simplicity and convenience.

Hey Jude app

PLP Group has been providing on-demand services to a host of companies for over 18 years. Soon it will be launching a new app, called Hey Jude, which will enable consumers to find, negotiate, organise and deliver any product or service at the best possible price. Backed by a large efficient team of people and a digital mesh of existing infrastructure in the background, it combines everything a consumer needs in one simple interface.

“We will be able to supply anything a customer needs, provided it is morally and legally available. Supported by artificial intelligence and smart assistant, customers will have more options than simply choosing from a predetermined menu of services – they will be able to ask for anything they need and receive a personalised service, catering for their unique needs in one simple app.”

The on-demand economy has led to a new trust-relationship between suppliers and consumers. As customers make use of the services, they are rated by suppliers and vice versa. Applications and services like these have affected consumer dynamics and have changed the way business operates.

“The on-demand economy is here to stay. It will represent the fastest and most significant shift in spending since the advent of internet commerce. Soon every need we have, every car we take, every purchase we make will be available at the tap of a button. Make sure your company is ready by partnering with the right people,” concludes Gehle.