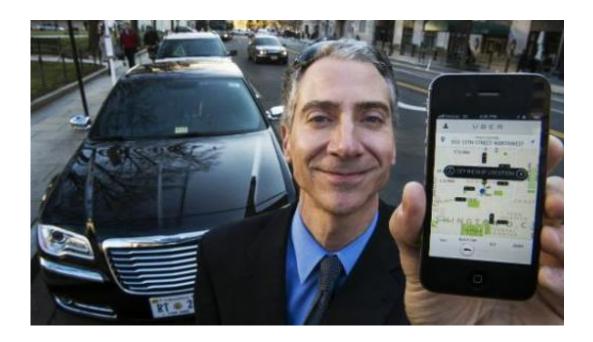# Uber pulls into mobile dining and travel apps (Update)

August 20 2014, by Glenn Chapman

Uber pulls into dining and travel smartphone applications as the Internet age car-hailing service moves to park itself at the heart of mobile lifestyles

Uber teamed up with dining and travel smartphone applications Wednesday as the controversial Internet-age car-hailing service moved to park itself at the heart of mobile lifestyles.

The San Francisco-based startup let about a dozen businesses such as Starbucks, Hyatt Hotels, United Airlines, TripAdvisor and restaurant reservation service OpenTable make it simple for people to summon

Uber cars from inside their applications for smartphones or tablet computers.

"We're excited to partner with Uber to help TripAdvisor travelers conveniently find a ride to their destination in cities throughout the world," TripAdvisor senior vice president of global product Adam Medros said.

Uber also released a software kit to allow makers of mobile apps to link to its platform, expanding its reach with a tactic that has proven effective for other Internet firms including Facebook and ramps up pressure on Uber's rivals such as Lyft.

It means that after people book flights or make dinner reservations online, for example, they can easily arrange for Uber cars to get them to airports or restaurants.
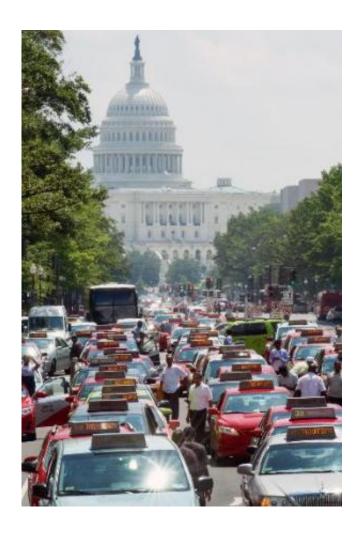
A "My Reservations" section in the Hyatt mobile application will feature a button icon letting users summon Uber cars.

"Our partnership with Uber offers customers new opportunities to simplify their travel experience," United Airlines vice president of loyalty Praveen Sharma said.

Uber did not release information about revenue sharing or referral fees involved with its new partners.

Taxi industry fuming

Taxi drivers park their cars and honk their horns in protest of ride sharing services like Uber on June 25, 2014, in Washington, DC

The announcement came a day after Uber revealed that a political strategist who ran US President Barack Obama's winning campaign in 2008 has hopped on board at the startup.

David Plouffe will become senior vice president of policy and strategy at the firm beginning late September.

Plouffe will manage Uber's global policy and political activities, communications, and branding efforts, Uber chief executive Travis

Kalanick said in a blog post, describing Plouffe as "a proven field general and strategist."

Plouffe's mission will include shepherding Uber "well beyond the challenges of the Big Taxi cartel and into the brave new world of software-powered transportation," according to Kalanick.

The Uber app, which allows clients to connect directly with "black car" services, has upset the established taxi set in several countries.

Uber delivers

As part of its ambitious expansion, Uber this week began testing the potential of having its drivers deliver over-the-counter medicine, candy, beauty supplies or other goods that might be fetched from neighborhood markets.

The service, called "Corner Store," lets people pay for items using Uber accounts on mobile devices and then have products delivered.

The test began on Tuesday and was limited to Washington, D.C.

"Forget racing to the store after a long day at the office," Uber said in an email message to members of the service in the US capital.

"We're bringing diapers, allergy medicine, toothpaste and over 100 other items to your doorstep in 10 minutes or less."

Uber is the most prominent of the apps that are shaking up the traditional taxi landscape in cities around the world.

It has already faced significant resistance from regulators, who accuse it of unfair competition and lack of standards.

Uber is only one of many new smartphone-dependent car services seen as bypassing strict regulations faced by licensed cab drivers.

Uber is present in more than 170 cities spread about dozens of countries.

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