

Chinese ride-share king Didi Chuxing could go global

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According to ride-sharing company Didi Chuxing president Jean Liu, Didi provides 20 million rides daily, three times that of all other ride-sharing companies in the world combined

Fresh from forcing Uber to back down in China, ride-sharing king Didi Chuxing plans to put what it knows to work in other parts of the world.

"We aspire to be a global company; we think it's our mission," Didi

Chuxing president Jean Liu said at a WSJD Live global technology conference that ended Wednesday in Laguna Beach, California.

"We feel the expertise and knowledge we build in China can benefit other markets."

Didi would like to collaborate with local ride-sharing companies where possible, but will consider launching its own operations in places where such services do not exist, she said.

Liu maintained that Didi has good partnerships with Lyft and Uber in the US market.

Didi, which claims almost 90 percent of the China ride-hailing market, announced the tie-up with Uber nearly three months ago, ending a ferocious battle for market share that saw it and Uber spending billions of dollars on subsidies for drivers and passengers.

The structure of the agreement leaves Didi in unquestioned control of the sector in the world's second-largest economy.

The transaction gave Uber a 20 percent share in the combined \$35 billion firm.

Earlier this year Uber said it had lost \$1 billion annually in China, and Didi was thought to be losing similar amounts of money.

Didi lists among its investors Apple and Chinese internet titans Alibaba and Tencent.

Driving data

Liu said that Didi provides 20 million rides daily, three times that of all

other ride-sharing companies in the world combined.

Matching such an incredible number of drivers and riders at a rapid-fire pace has made Didi a data company, according to Liu.

Didi software mines mountains of data to get to know drivers and passengers, and to anticipate where rides will be needed, she said.

Didi expected having a rich trove of driving data to analyze will also help in adapting to the inexorable introduction of [self-driving cars](#) for ride sharing, by helping teach software to handle the roads as people do.

Lyft co-founder and president John Zimmer said at WSJD Live that all was well with a partnership made with Didi late last year, before that company's alliance with US arch-rival Uber.

"We continue to find ways to work together," Zimmer said during an onstage chat at WSJD Live.

"We have this 'Modern Family' situation with all different relationships," he added. in an apparent reference to a US television comedy series.

For now, Zimmer said, Lyft is focused on the US market and exploring the potential for using autonomous cars in ride sharing.

Lyft has a partnership with General Motors on autonomous vehicles. Zimmer has gone on record with his belief in a coming "transportation revolution" stemming from a shift to self-driving cars, and that by 2025 "private car ownership will all but end in major US cities."

Uber recently launched driverless cars for its ride-sharing services in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and major automakers and technology firms are racing to be part of the movement.

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