Ethiopian taxi app plans relaunch

By Tom Jackson   21 Sep 2016

Ethiopian taxi hailing startup RIDE has pivoted away from its SMS-based functionality to a mobile application, with a relaunch planned for early next year.

Image by 123RF

Disrupt Africa reported earlier this year on RIDE, a project under Addis Ababa-based software development company Hybrid Systems launched in December 2014.

Though ostensibly based on the Uber model, the startup was different as it allowed users to request taxis via SMS.

That has now changed, with RIDE pivoting and adopting the more common mobile app approach to taxi hailing. Founder Samrawit Fikru told Disrupt Africa the change in direction had been prompted by the increasing internet coverage and usage of smartphones in Ethiopia.

"Also, SMS was too slow to connect the driver with the customer," she said. "We have done with the application, we are now working on integration with the technology in the car, like the meter and GPS."

RIDER will relaunch in the new year after signing an exclusive deal with local taxi firm Ze-Lucy Meter Taxi, which will see RIDE technology deployed in cars.

ABOUT TOM JACKSON

Co-founder @DisruptAfrica. Tech and business journalist in Africa. Passionate about the vibrant tech startups scene in Africa, Tom can usually be found sniffing out the continent's most exciting new companies and entrepreneurs, funding rounds and any other developments within the growing ecosystem.

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