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About Ola:

Ola is India's first and largest aggregator of cabs with over 18,000 cabs across its 12 cities of operations. Founded in January 2011 by two IIT Bombay alumni Bhavish Aggarwal and Ankit Bhati, Ola integrates car transportation within the city onto a technology platform, ensuring convenient, transparent and quick service fulfillment for the customers and driver partners. Customers can access Ola on the web, through the mobile app or through the customer service centre.

Ola does not own or operate its own fleet, but aggregates small operators and single vehicle owners. The inventory utilization among small cab operators (ownership of 1-3 cabs) in India is an abysmal 40-50%. Cab owners benefit from the Olacabs network and technology platform and that in turn helps them procure customers and enhance their income through better inventory utilization.

Ola is also the first service to offer Android, iPhone and Windows app in India that not only books a cab, but also helps customers track their cab on their mobile phone until it reaches them. Ola's GPS enabled mobile app for the driver helps receive booking requests from customers in the vicinity and navigate to the customer's pickup point with utmost ease. Such cutting-edge technology also enables us to crunch intense analytics including demand and traffic heat-maps, usage behavior, potholes and speed data for the entire city. Ola also works with leading car manufacturers and financial institutions to help drivers buy their own cars at huge discounts and access to affordable repayment schemes, thereby nurturing micro-entrepreneurship.

Number Crunch:

- Ola is present in 12 cities today across India. With over 18,000 cabs across these cities, Ola is the single largest player in India with such a wide presence. The brand intends to be present in at least 20 cities by the end of this year.
- Ola's revenue is growing at an average of 30% month on month (fastest in its league) and at least 2000 cars get added on the platform every month pan-India.
- Over 70% of the bookings come through the mobile app! The rest significantly comes through the call centre and a small number via the website.
- Ola has raised ~\$70mn through venture capital funds and has prestigious investors like Tiger Global, Matrix Partners, Steadview Capital and Sequoia Capital on board.
- The latest round of Series C funding was to the tune of INR 250cr (~\$40mn).

Market:

The Indian cab market is pegged to be anywhere between \$8-10bn and is forecast to grow at an over 20% annually. Most importantly, barely 5% of this market is organized and the rest of it is scattered across small to medium sized operators owning a car of their own or a few cars over time with appointed drivers.

India, annually sells 2.6mn cars and over 13mn two wheelers in the personal vehicle space segment. Car ownership in India is still very low and the only known public transportation option at (any) known scale are the autorickshaws! In spite of this, mobility is an issue and a high quality, reliable transportation option a dream for most cities in the country.

Look around yourself on the roads and you'll find most cars with one or at most, two passengers. This is not just inefficient, but also expensive in the long run for individual car owners as well as those availing of cab services.

Using technology, especially mobile, at scale has been the strategy adopted by Ola as a provider of Transportation as a Service. To put it in perspective over 8mn smartphones are bought in India every month! That means, there is an emerging medium to reach out to the Indian customer and solve basic problems like transportation for him, efficiently.

The Challenge:

Ride sharing is an interesting area where Ola has still not set foot into. While this could be a sustainable and scalable solution, there have been no success stories in the past around this in our country. This product can potentially change the way Indian cities move and can atleast partially solve for the 'Indian transportation problem'. There are clearly three use cases here.

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- Ola users who are also personal car owners - enabling ride sharing for privately owned cars across the city.
- Public transport users or others who do not use a cab today only due to the entry barrier of prohibitive pricing at an individual level.
- Existing cab users who can potentially travel at a far lower fare. Why isn't ride sharing an Indian phenomenon?
- A car is seen as something very personal, may not be something Indians are prone to share proactively.
- Privacy while travelling is a concern – travelling with strangers and the possibility of making new friends doesn't seem very motivating.
- Predictability and planning are tough nuts to crack in the Indian context - with roads, traffic etc. adding to the woes
- Regulation, safety measures, payment system etc. create another level of barrier to adoption.

Specific Deliverables:

- For Idea on a Page: Insight for Building Ride Sharing and their plan for that insight.
- For Campus Round Presentation: In addition to deliverable 1, elucidate the go to market strategy and social media plan.

Global Examples and Success Stories:

- Lyft is a privately held, San Francisco-based American transportation network company. The company's mobile-phone application facilitates peer-to-peer ride sharing by enabling passengers who need a ride to request one from available "community drivers"
- BlaBlaCar is a French startup building a community marketplace that connects drivers with empty seats to passengers looking for a ride. Car owners and ride-seekers sign up as members of BlaBlaCar much like a social network.
- Sidecar is a Transportation Network Company that connects people for shared rides with operations based in San Francisco.

Available Framework:

- Challengers can assume all of Ola's available infrastructure in terms of technology, mobile app, analytic and data sources are available apart from proposed innovations that are focused on the ride sharing product.
- All resources across products, booking modes and categories can be assumed to be available for the ride sharing product as well.
- Ola's focus has been on using technology to scale up the city's transportation landscape. The product should be able to address the customer problem at scale.

Recommended Research:

- Primary research is strongly recommended on 'sharing as a habit/customer trait' and ride sharing in particular.
- Primary research data from proposed customer bases on why ride sharing is favourable or concerns to be addressed.
- Secondary research on available inventory, public transportation, car ownership in India and comparative stats with evolved markets.
- Secondary research on business models in the past and analysis of their success or failure.