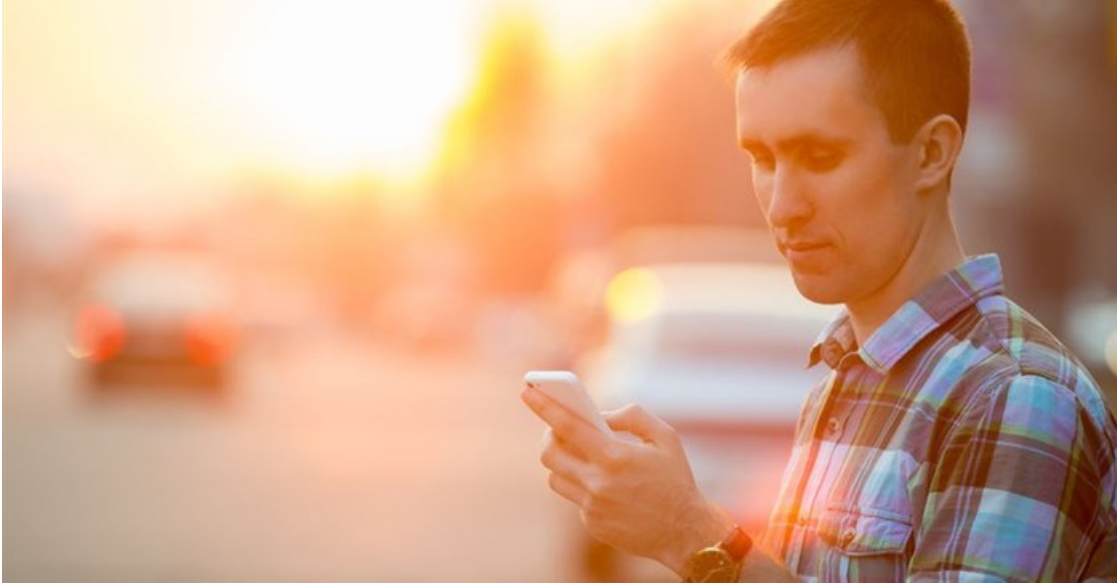


Hail Uber as taxi service comes to PE

By [Lee-Anne Butler](#)

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After massive demand via email and on social media Uber - the international transport network which allows you to request a ride at the tap of a button - will launch in Port Elizabeth.



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The Uber service allows consumers with smartphones who have downloaded the Uber mobile app to submit a trip request which is then routed to Uber drivers who use their own cars.

After submitting a trip request, commuters can track their driver's route in real time, see the driver's name, vehicle and registration details, and even see the cost of the trip before getting into the vehicle. The system is cashless and people who download the app are requested to provide credit or cheque card details before registering for the service.

At a media launch at the Radisson Blu hotel, Uber announced that after conducting research it had found that Port Elizabeth ticked all the boxes as the next suitable city to launch the service. "We looked at the population size, the number of people using social media, the number of people using smartphones, internet usage and other factors," Uber's general manager for sub-Saharan Africa, Alon Lits, said. "Also, we have received a flood of requests on social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, where people have been asking when we plan to launch in PE."

Growing in numbers

Port Elizabeth is the fifth city in South Africa - after Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria - to receive the service. A total of 4,000 jobs have been created in South Africa and Uber expects the number of job opportunities to increase to 15,000 by 2017. Uber already has a presence in 361 cities in 63 countries around the world.

Lits said since the service first launched in Johannesburg two years ago, 10,000 unique users had downloaded the app in Port Elizabeth to request a ride. "So, obviously, there is a huge demand for the service in Port Elizabeth. Already the growth in Johannesburg and Cape Town has outstripped the growth of Uber in London and Paris, and we expect massive growth in PE as well," he said.

Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism chief executive Mandlakazi Skefile said: "We are so excited to welcome Uber to Nelson Mandela Bay. They will provide convenient transport solutions to both locals and visitors."

Meanwhile, King Cab Taxi Service owner John Dicker said it was too early to say if the introduction of Uber would have an impact on his 14-year- old business. Omega Cabs owner Wayne Burton said: "I think it may have an impact on the single clients, like guys who want to go to a pub, but I do not see it making that much of an impact as there is enough work for everyone."

Source: Herald

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