

Regulators 'Coming Round' to Uber - Alon Lits

Acceptance among transport regulators of internet ride-sharing app Uber is growing, says the company's Sub-Saharan Africa managing director Alon Lits. Lits was speaking at the FNB Franchise Summit held at Johannesburg's Montecasino on Thursday September 1. He attributed the success of the "e-hailing" service to its disruptive model.



Alon Lits

"Disruption happens with challenges. There has been push-back from taxies," said Lits. This was evident not only in South Africa but in Latin America, London and Paris too, he said.

"But we see commitment from governments around the world to make changes because they see the benefits that Uber brings." Currently a bill is being tabled in Parliament to introduce an e-hailing by-law to the National Land and Transport Act. "We are not clear on when it will be passed," said Lits.

Earlier this year, Fin24 reported that over 300 Uber cars were impounded between January and June 2016 because drivers did not have metered taxi permits. But Lits highlighted that it's not about treating meter taxi services and Uber as separate entities. "It's not about Uber or taxi. It's about Uber and taxi."

He explained that meter taxi drivers can use the Uber platform as an additional revenue stream.

Worldwide, Uber operates in over 500 cities, 70 countries and has over one million drivers. Uber was first launched in Johannesburg, three years ago, followed by Cape Town and Durban. In South Africa, there have essentially been 121 trips

to the moon and back on the platform, he said. "It is a reflection of the exponential growth potential in South Africa," he said.

Globally, the service hit its one-billionth trip booked in December 2015 and its two-billionth trip in June 2016.

Source: Fin24

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