

Uber to launch payment experiment in SA this week

Uber, the smartphone app that connects riders to drivers, is to launch a cash payment experiment in South Africa on Thursday, 26 May, 2016, when SA becomes the first country in Uber's global network to experiment with cash payments across five cities simultaneously.



Alon Lits, GM of Uber sub-Saharan Africa, said: "We're always looking at how we can make it easier for people to benefit from the convenient, safe and affordable option of taking an Uber. This experiment will help us understand whether riders and driver-partners welcome the choice of paying by cash or card. As before, all trip details are electronically recorded and riders will always be able to pay by debit or credit card if they prefer.

"Offering cash as an alternate option has proven to be very successful for Uber. The introduction of cash in Singapore, for example, had an extremely positive response and this is a country that has a substantial credit card penetration and very high GDP per capita."

Even though credit cards are common, many are surprised to learn that cash payments currently make up 65% of all transactions in South Africa. By introducing this experiment, Uber discovered three simple ways that cash could make it a little easier for everyone who needs a ride in South Africa:

- **Removing the fear factor for first-time riders:** Many people still have concerns about credit cards. All South Africans should have the freedom to choose the way they travel and cash is a truly inclusive way to let everyone move around their city reliably and affordably;
- **No credit card? No worries:** Cash opens doors for more South Africans to take their first ride, whether they are a busy mum, a university student without a credit card, or a senior citizen who's more comfortable using cash; and
- **More riders means more trips for drivers:** When more riders choose Uber and there is a higher demand for trips, driver-partners will spend more of every hour moving people, less time waiting around and so get more money.

The right environment to experiment

South Africa was selected for this experiment, because it provides Uber with the right environment to experiment a cash payment option amongst a sizeable and sophisticated rider and driver-partner community. Cash is a dominant payment method in Africa and this experiment will give Uber insight into how riders and driver-partners adopt and use a mix of cash and electronic payments, how consumer behaviour changes and what Uber can do to build a better product and provide a

better experience. The lesson learnt here in South Africa (and across Africa) could have implications for the business across the world.

Lits added: “The interest in South Africa has been amazing, and we are excited to experiment with cash payments on the Uber platform. Riders in South Africa already have access to reliable, convenient and safe transportation and this cash experiment opens up the Uber platform to even more people.”

Cash is an open-ended experiment, so not all riders will see this additional payment option right away. Riders and driver-partners are encouraged to share their feedback with Uber at support@uber.com or on Facebook or Twitter using the hashtag [#uberCASH](https://twitter.com/uberCASH).

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