

The fitness sector is continuously searching for new strategies to improve customer engagement and experience. To better understand this topic and select strategies to increase customer engagement, different perspectives and models can be used. For example, from a health behaviour perspective, a whole range of scientific models are available. To give a broad understanding of customer engagement, this chapter will briefly describe different perspectives to provide a list of strategies which can be used in the customer journey, and to maximize customer engagement. First, another sector will shortly be reviewed in terms of its customer engagement and the customer journey.

## **2.2 The changing customer engagement and journey in the taxi sector**

The fitness sector is not the only sector to experience a changing customer journey. In many other sectors the customer journey has also changed such as for travel agents (with the advent of online booking), for restaurants (with online reservations and ordering) and also for taxis. In this paragraph, the changing customer journey in the taxi sector will be reviewed in further detail.

Today a taxi journey often starts by standing on a street and waiving as long as needed for a cab to be hailed. In many cities, taxis highlight if they are occupied (red light), so customers do not have to pointlessly waive. If picked up, the ride is characterised by zero to a minimum of information, listening to the music chosen by the taxi driver, and no route control or feedback. Often payment has to be in cash, but more modern taxis also accept credit cards.

*The customer journey in fitness clubs is often short and bumpy. For example, a retrospective study on 259.355 ex-members of two European fitness chains indicated that 19.5% had never attended the club.*

When this classic taxi journey is compared to more recent options, it is clear that substantial changes are taking place. Table 2.1 provides an overview of describing a ride in four simple stages; the booking, pick-up, drive and payment, and by discussing four important aspects of the journey; features and benefits, connections between people involved, information provided and interactions.

**TABLE 2.1**  
Overview of changes in the customer journey for taxis.

STAGE	FEATURES AND BENEFITS	CONNECTIONS	INFORMATION	INTERACTIONS
BOOK	AVAILABILITY, OPTIONS, TRUST	CUSTOMER TO?	LOCATION	FEES, ETC
PICK UP	FAST AND SIMPLE	LOCATION	TRANSPARENT FEES	TRANSPARENT TIMES
DRIVE	COMFORT, SAFETY, FAST	STREET, ROUTE	TV PLUS INFO	PLAY OWN MUSIC
PAY	OPTIONS, TRUST, CONTROL	TO DRIVER	DETAILED INVOICE	FAST, I.E BY EMAIL

By reviewing the features and benefits of all stages of a taxi journey, it is evident that availability, multiple options and trust that the taxi is arriving on time are important to customers. The pick-up should be fast and simple, and the drive comfortable, safe and fast. When it comes to payment, most customers like to have a number of options (like cash or credit card), and some assurance that the driver is not using any 'tricks'.

**PICTURE 2.1**  
Example of an Uber invoice.


**Thanks for riding Uber!**

**BILLED TO**  
John Smith

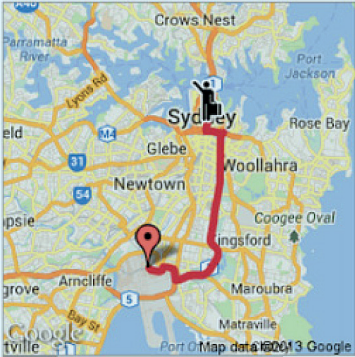
**TRIP REQUEST DATE**  
June 12, 2013 at 06:33pm

**PICKUP LOCATION**  
1/111 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia

**DROPOFF LOCATION**  
Shiers Avenue, Sydney Airport (SYD), Mascot NSW 2020, Australia

**CREDIT CARD**  
 Personal MasterCard - 0989

**BILLED TO CARD**  
**\$38.50**



**DRIVER**  
Thomas

Invoice issued on behalf of:  
Lucky Taxi  
ABN: xxxxxxxxxxxx

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Fare Breakdown	Trip Statistics
<b>CHARGES</b>	<b>DISTANCE</b>
Meter Fare	<b>12.36 kilometers</b>
<b>Charge subtotal</b>	<b>DURATION</b>
<b>\$38.50</b>	<b>18 minutes, 32 seconds</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>AVERAGE SPEED</b>
<b>Without Taxes</b>	<b>40.03 km/h</b>
<b>GST (10%)</b>	
<b>Total Fare</b>	
<b>\$38.50</b>	

For example, Uber has changed the customer journey described above quite dramatically. By using an App, it is possible to precisely choose a taxi close to the preferred pick-up place and to be able to check when the taxi actually arrives. The customer can track the taxi progress and when it comes to payment, Uber gives a detailed invoice including the route, fee to be paid, et cetera, and the payment is done in a split second. See Picture 2.1.

For ongoing travel connections, information and interactions, the customer is now being offered many more options. During the ride, more and more taxis give information of the route, resulting in more trust at the customer, and via blue tooth, it is also possible to play the preferred music of the customer, instead of listening to the radio choice of the driver. These and other options result in an improved customer experience, engagement for the journey.

## SIMPLE STRATEGY

### MEMBER-GET-MEMBER PROMOTION

In mature markets one of the most well-known tested, and proven success methods is the member-get-member promotion. It often works along the lines that your club promotes to existing members during a certain period (usually one month) the possibility to either fill in a form online or hard copy to give the name and email address of a friend to become member of your club. The benefit is that the more friends and family someone has training

in the same club the more camaraderie, which will improve the retention of those members. It is important to remember that the member who refers a friend gets a reward for their introduction. Usually this is done in the form of a free extra month of membership for each member they bring in. Other forms of reward that are often used are gifts like a free sports bag, or free personal training hours.