

Background:

Increasing number of vehicles on road is causing huge traffic jams and severely affecting the environment, productivity and the economy. People who are conscious and want to contribute in improving the situation, or otherwise want to avoid driving in congested roads, would like to find alternatives like carpooling and ridesharing. The challenge in traditional carpooling is it only works within fixed group of people who have near perfect coordination and understanding in terms of matching timings, and matching start and end points. However in today's work environments with dynamic requirements and flexible timings, finding even one stable carpooling partner is very difficult.

Need: There clearly exists the need of a system that can connect people working at the same company (or building or tech-park) and travelling along same route(s). It should allow users to connect dynamically based on matching route and timing with the objective of sharing a vehicle. This behaviour, when adopted by sufficiently large number of people, will help decongest roads by reducing number of vehicles in the long run.

Only if ride-sharing/carpooling survives the initial days, and manages to attract a sufficiently large user base within a geographical area – it can survive and thrive to a level where the long term benefits of less congested roads, lower carbon footprint and greener environment become a reality.

For a massive multi-user community that is necessary for carpooling to become sustainable, only an automated tracking and recording system of ride-share credits, with a common basis of calculation, would help in keeping track of each user's contribution to the cause of carpooling.

Constraint: As per Indian Motor Vehicles Act, private vehicles cannot carry passengers for commercial gains. Hence Car Owners and Co-Travelers are strictly limited by Law to share a private vehicle in a private capacity, and any other 'Services' are strictly forbidden. The Car Owner must not provide any additional services to the Co-Traveler in exchange for hiring charges.

Solution: In view of the need, and keeping the constraints in consideration, Quick Ride has devised a solution. When a member (user of the Quick Ride platform) offers ride-share/carpool, she/he gets Quick Ride 'ride points' that can be used to avail a ride from someone else who is also part of this network. These points are strictly restricted for use - either for availing shared rides from others, or (as of now) for exchanging for fuel

as if cost-shared by co-traveller. The system does not allow, or encourage, any cash transactions between members, or any redemption of points for cash.

A user can accumulate ride points by offering rides to others, or by 'buying' ride points (1 point = 1 rupee) using online payment modes. These points can then be used to cost-share for rides on empty seats offered by other users ('Riders'). The cost-share happens at a pre-agreed rate (default 3 points per km per seat, customizable between 0 – 8 points per km) based on the shared distance in kilometres. The points get transferred from Passenger (shared ride seeker) to Rider (shared ride provider) at the end of the ride.

Users who accumulate sufficient points may also get to use these points to share costs for maintaining the vehicle (e.g., fuel, cleaning, servicing of vehicles) – in the future. In all cases, points accumulated in the Quick Ride system can only be used for sharing costs related to the vehicle – of either running the vehicle (e.g., fuel) or maintaining the vehicle (e.g., servicing), apart from using these to get shared rides from other users. This system enables ride-sharing/carpooling to happen between users with cashless cost-sharing, and paving the way to develop carpooling habits. The upper limit of the points has been currently capped at 8 points per kilometre. If required, it may be further refined in future, to ensure ride-sharing happens only for cost sharing and does not become a for-profit activity.

Quick Ride terms and conditions clearly state that the platform is to be used only for ride sharing activities and sharing associated costs, and not for any commercial purposes. Every user must agree to the terms and conditions before using the platform at the time of sign up.

Also, Quick Ride closely observes usage and scrutinizes every redemption request by users. Any suspicious activity or pattern is thoroughly investigated using a due process before allowing users to redeem points even for fuel. In doubtful cases where misuse (beyond legitimate usage as defined under 'Terms of Service' in the Quick Ride website), Quick Ride – as provider and administrator of services in this platform – reserves the right to refuse redemption requests by individual users.