


Chapter 7

Global Ambitions, Local Realities: Uber Eats' Marketing Strategy in India and Its Demise

Gurloveleen Kaur

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0018-4423>

Chitkara University, India

Megha Goyal

Chitkara University, India

ABSTRACT

This case examines Uber Eats' journey since its inception in 2014, focusing on its challenges in India. It showcases how Uber Eats adapted to serve customers globally, handling rapid growth, technological advancements, and partnerships. Despite facing hurdles like operational efficiency and the COVID-19 pandemic, Uber Eats emphasized innovation to stay ahead. The case also looks at Zomato's acquisition of Uber Eats in India, highlighting its impact on the food delivery industry and competition with Swiggy. It aims to offer insights into Uber Eats' performance, partnerships, and competition, providing valuable lessons for industry players. The case concludes with discussion questions to deepen understanding of strategic initiatives and industry trends.

INTRODUCTION

This case explores the revolutionary path taken by Uber Eats, a division of Uber Technologies, Inc., from its establishment in Los Angeles in 2014 to its current position as a prominent player in the worldwide meal delivery market but a failure in the Indian Market. It looks at how Uber Eats has adapted to serve a wide range of customers in thousands of cities throughout the globe by navigating through quick growth, technology breakthroughs, and clever alliances. To improve customer experience and keep its market leadership, Uber Eats has continuously invested in innovation, even in the face of obstacles like operational efficiency and adjusting to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact. In order to expand its products, Uber Eats has integrated services like groceries and alcohol delivery, and the piece also emphasizes the

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company's strategic approaches to partnerships and market expansion. Although Uber Eats enjoyed a strong start, it faced varying levels of customer satisfaction over time. Issues like tardy deliveries, inaccuracies in estimated arrival times (ETAs), and occasional drops in service quality emerged as the company grew. The inconsistent service, marked by occasional delays and communication mishaps, resulted in customer discontent, and consistently hindered the company's efforts to uphold high satisfaction levels. It also discusses the competitive environment in India, going over Zomato's acquisition of Uber Eats and its effects on the meal delivery industry.

The benefit from takeover by Zomato is discussed, which provides and enhances the knowledge related to the strategic alliances. Zomato got stronger in delivering meals in India by buying Uber Eats and bringing in its customers, restaurants, and delivery system. Even though there were some problems combining the two services, Zomato worked hard to make sure customers stayed happy. Buying Uber Eats made Zomato compete more with Swiggy, so they came up with new ways to attract customers, like cool ads and deals. Zomato wanted to keep growing and making more money, so they used the Uber Eats purchase to help them do that. They also got chances to try new things, like going into new markets and making money in different ways. This made Zomato's future look even brighter. Analysing Uber Eats' performance in the competitive landscape provides valuable insights for Zomato's strategy and contributes to industry discussions on meal delivery's evolution and its impact on all players involved. Moreover, the case offers insights into the elements influencing Uber Eats' performance and the difficulties it encounters in a competitive market through a thorough analysis. The questions are given at the end of the case, so that readers get a better understanding of the content. These questions will shed light on the concept of strategic initiatives undertaken by Uber Eats to expand its service offerings beyond traditional food delivery at global level. Thoroughly describes the impact of Uber Eats' acquisition by Zomato on the food delivery industry in India and the lessons learned by the uber eats case study that can be implemented for further improvement. This case study is written with the purpose to fully equip the readers about the starting of Uber Eats till the end of the brand in the Indian market.

Food Delivery Industry in India

Over the past few decades, the food delivery sector in India has experienced tremendous expansion and evolution due to a variety of factors including evolving consumer demands, technical advancements, and the introduction of new market participants. Before the advent of digital technology, the only places in India where people could get food delivered to their homes were neighbourhood eateries. Customers usually placed their orders by calling restaurants directly, using the outdated telephone-based ordering systems that were widely used. Delivery wait times were frequently lengthy, and the variety of cuisines offered was restricted to eateries in the vicinity. Online meal ordering services like Just Eat, Food panda, and Swiggy (established in 2014) began to appear in India in the early 2000s. These platforms increased the variety of restaurants and cuisines available to clients by providing them with the ease of ordering food online through websites or mobile apps.

Online food delivery services were not as widely used at this time due to poor smartphone usage and internet penetration. India's meal delivery business had a sharp rise in the mid-to late-2010s, driven by rising internet usage, smartphone adoption, and shifting customer habits. There were fierce competition as well-established firms like Uber Eats (which debuted in India in 2017), Swiggy, and Zomato (which was first established as Foodiebay in 2008) fought hard for market dominance. These platforms made significant investments in marketing, technology, and logistics to boost user experience, expedite deliv-

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