Adjust Imbalanced Relationship Between Flex Couriers and Platforms
Touch and Pick

Pick health, sustainable and service topics, finding their interesting stories by Pinboard, Guardian and Twitter.

Sharing interesting topics and stories with Chen Han, broaden each other's minds.

According to three subjects to make mind maps in order to find topics and HMW. Finally, pick delivery in Service as next stage topic.
Receive Helping

According to tutorial, I realized the term “gig economy” which accurately explained the background of my topic.

By understanding his meaning, I became clearer about the outline of research direction and provided important keywords for me to find cases and research materials.

Through group sharing, I watched a video about the concept of a new innovation delivery platform (COOPCYCLE).

Besides, Jonanthan recommended a documentary which recorded dangerous jobs in global epidemic. Through it, I found couriers played key roles in our life but confront dangerous situations.

The story give me great empathy to touch their real concerns.

Secondary Research

I read various related online materials such as, journals, news, articles to find courier's situation and experts' insights.

Gig economy traps workers in precarious existence, says report

By understanding his meaning, I became clearer about the outline of research direction and provided important keywords for me to find cases and research materials.

CURRENT PROBLEMS

- a lack of financial security
- a loss of dignity at work
- the inability to progress in a career or train to leave it.

POPULAR REASON (GIG ECONOMY)

- the emergence of new technology
- there are far more people looking for work than there are good jobs available, leaving workers with less bargaining power with platform employers
The nature of the job of gig workers

Employees and normal workers enjoy corresponding health protection and contracts, but couriers and other gig workers are called self-employed, not only do not have a stable income and protection security, and do not have any benefits and unemployment insurance.

Long Term Goal

By improving the relationship between the two, I can positively influence the changes among other stakeholders and improve the happiness of the courier group.
First trying to build connection with couriers by the discussion group of Facebook. And interviewed the group of administrators of the truck couriers discussion group.

Questionaires

Focus Groups:

Customers  Couriers   Platform (employer)

Draw Persona And Journey Map

Feedback

Narrow down the scope of the focus group.

Marian Angelov Nestorov

Subcontractor for big delivery company

“I have been doing this for 9 years, it’s a good job”
**Interview With Innovation Platform**

**Mind Map**

- **Unstable Work Nature (Gig Economy)**
  - No paid holiday
  - No pension
  - No guaranteed hours
  - No guaranteed income
  - No easy way to negotiate improved conditions

- **Most Age Ranges of the Courier**
  - 20-30

- **Complete Control Conditions They Afford by Themselves (to Coopcycle Workers)**
  - Slack Channel for Federation Communication

- **Urgency of the Issue Problems**
  - Guided by the federations needs

- **The Cooperative (part of a larger federation)**
  - Jointly funded

- **Business Partner = Cooperative (one member/one vote)**

- **Challenge: Create Better Documentation**
  - The development of software

- **Related Skills Training**

**Bike Couriers’ Workflow**

**On-demand food delivery:**
Order from customer ---- Accept order (restaurant) ---- dispatcher notification ---- providing ready time (restaurant) ---- allocate couriers (dispatcher) ---- pick up order (courier) ---- delivery to customer (courier)

**Non food items:**
Accept delivery order----collect delivery manifest/itinerary ---- drive to recipient ---- signature/proof of complete delivery
System Map

Journey Map

- ORDER: customer order food
- READY: whether accept
- ALLOCATE: automatic provide ready time
- PICK UP: notification
- DELIVERY: allocate couriers according to places/ knots
- Delivery to customer

02 INTERVIEW
DISCOVERY
02 INTERVIEW DISCOVERY

EWAN HARVEY
26
Uber Eat

TONY KHAN
28
 Deliveroo

SATO KEITA
30
Demae-can

MR. DING
31
JD

MR. LEE
29
Alibaba

ZOLTAN FARKAS
35
sub-contractor

Ewan

Age 26

Only source of income

reduce our income

Ding

Age 35

lack of confidence in this job

Hard to pay "good job" which is very high salary

Lee

Age 32

able people do more work

more pay for more work

JD Alibaba sub-contractor

Deliveroo

Uber Eat

Demae-can

member of union

Restaurants take a long time to deliver food

delay complaint

Hope platform provide more quick help

Take many time and don't receive any feedback

Many customers will show respect to them

Difficult communicate

High risk during the delivery extra report

Busy

Men hardest problems:

Delays, difficult to communicate

Reduce our income

Member of union

Foundation of this job

Hard to pay "good job" which is very high salary. Finally get the job

High risk during the delivery extra report

Busier
**FINANCIAL SECURITY**

**Without Social Safety Net**
- Related safeguard: credit scoring and overpicking in earning and job opportunity
- Work insurance
- Holiday pay
- Only parity visible
- Imbalanced relationship between both sides

**DIGNITY**

**Faceless app mediates**
- The distance between platforms and customers
- Leaves them isolated and disconnected
- No more generic automated support
- Slack the noise and contact needed to answer their complaints
- Lack of feedback and communications needed by improved automation
- Make governance structure greater value

**Low Pay**
- Unavoidable cost
- Insurance and equipment fees
- Unemployment and underemployment for gig workers
- How to navigate frequently changing roles

**Dream**

**National Retraining Scheme**
- Provide the holistic support that gig workers need now
- Help with the 90% of drop-ins support to employment
- Long-term career opportunities
- Employment and training for gig workers' daily lives
- Holistic financial and wellbeing support

**Lack Road Map**
- Unpredictable micro-chunks
- Lack of roadmap for making these dreams a reality
- Long hours/financial insecurity/present gig work
- Frustrated workers' workflows in units of minutes and hours
- Narrowing their horizons
- Algorithmic surge pricing, short-term ratings and performance metrics
- Focus workers' attention on the present at the expense of the future

*Re-designing digital gig work | doteveryone*

*From Gladstone pottery to the Gig Economy*

*A Better Work Dispatch from Stoke-on-Trent*

We are currently undertaking in-depth, qualitative research with gig workers to better understand their needs and help develop ways for them to manage their money and progress in their careers.

Here are some brief insights from a recent research trip to talk to Uber drivers in the city of Stoke-on-Trent.

Workers often have access to human interaction to validate questions or seek assistance.
Cooperate With Union

Listen Feedback

Explore The Website

Seek Contact

Communicate with workers in IWGB
Focused Point

How might we short distance between couriers and platform?

- Build more human communication
- Contact more efficient to emergency
- Creating more channels to express courier's feelings
- Using power of union to supervise platform and protect couriers' rights

FUNCTION of IWGB

Main Bright Sides
- Public Stress Activity
  - Couriers reflect problems but not get response on time from platform.
  - Union receive materials and feedback
  - If not agree, conduct legal proceedings based on the evidence gathered
- Legal Appeals/Safeguard
  - Couriers record loss and influence due to non-communication
  - Union reflect situation and claim for compensation to platform
The couriers make their own dream plans and wish lists on the platform. If the Suggestions and questions you submit are important and meaningful, the platform will give you a grant in your wish page to encourage your contribution. Setting an emergency button on the interface. If there is an emergency or important problem, you can directly click to contact the staff of the express service center.

- Share Part
- Help Part
- Dream Plan Page

Simplify interaction process and improve operation efficiency.
**Storyboard**

**Scheme Demonstration**

People submit their information online to the rights protection department of the union, and IWGB will negotiate with the platform according to the seriousness of the consequences, and make up for the losses. If no agreement can be reached, legal appeals will be made according to the materials to protect the legitimate rights and interests of couriers.

When flex rider couriers confront some problems and have some feelings during their work, they can share these messages on the community of the platform APP. Other couriers will “like and comment” on messages they like and have resonance.

If riders can't contact platform, such as staff service or related departments to solve their emergency on time. And it cause negative influence on their job and salary, they can click IWGB button to seek help.

For couriers whose messages are popular and meaningful, the platform will support their future plans and wish lists according to their “dream home page”. To encourage their help in improving the platform.

When riders face some emergency or important events, they can directly click the help button to quickly contact professional staff to solve the problem and receive advice.
Interactive Relationship

Community Part

Dream Page

Seek Help (IWGB)

Share Insights
04 DEVELOP
PROTOTYPE

Courier:
courier have greater voice to express their insights and suggestions to keep their right.

Platform:
Extending the good reputation of the platform, increase the belongings of the staff to platform, can find better suggestions and direction to improve/optimizied their govrance structure and brand.

IWGB:
union have more influence, increasingly couriers accept and recognize this new and innovation union.

Process Diagram
Verify The Scheme And Prototype

As the prototype has no chance to be tested, I hope to contact more union members and riders through Seb after he returns from vacation. Trying to test and communicate with them adequately through co-design and workshop, and ask them for their opinions and suggestions on the project so as to adjust the project prototype, make it more suitable for the life and habits of the target group, and serve them better.

Redefine The Role of Union

The new Trade Union (IWGB) has played a big role in maintaining the rights of flex couriers through data collected previously. But they usually appear at the back of the stage, after riders are in trouble. I want to try to discuss with the union staff (Seb) about the future planning of the union. Whether the platform can play a more important role through closer communication with the platform.

Cooperate With Specialist

I met Ning Ma when I was looking for people to target at Facebook. Through chatting, I know that she had just finished her doctorate in computer information systems in the United States. Her projects are very similar to mine in terms of improving gig worker rights through his professional programming and so on. We both hope to continue to cooperate with each other in this project, and I am sure that I can learn some knowledge about the system algorithm structure to better improve the system of the platform through the communication with her.