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How Rapido is building customer and rider trust in India with Google Maps Platform



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Editor's note: Today's article comes from Srivatsa Katta, Head of Engineering, Rapido. He shares how Rapido is building customer and rider trust with Google Maps Platform

Navigating roads in India's major cities can be a headache for residents and visitors, and cities like Mumbai and Bengaluru are notorious for traffic snarls and extended trip times. This means bike taxis are an increasingly popular way of minimizing the impact of traffic congestion on journey times and experiences.

At [Rapido](#), we are at the forefront of this travel mode, experiencing three- or fourfold growth since our start in 2015. Around 4 million Rapido riders or "captains" today complete 60 million rides per month. Still, this represents only about 5% of the total addressable market in India. In the next few years, we plan to grow to 100 million monthly rides.

Building trust and visibility

To deliver on this growing market opportunity, we needed to build trust among current and prospective customers and captains on our platform. This meant giving customers greater visibility and certainty over the location and ETA of a booked taxi, the proposed route, the accuracy of pickup and dropoff locations, and the price.

We also needed to provide captains with accurate routing and live traffic updates to help them complete trips as quickly and smoothly as possible. We needed to track these journeys ourselves to optimize the customer and captain experience and identify opportunities to innovate and deliver efficiencies.

This meant integrating precise, up-to-date, and highly functional mapping services within the Rapido mobile app, with additional features developed and added through Google Maps Platform products. But to achieve our objectives, we needed to complement our internal engineering resources with skilled external expertise.



Turning to Searce for support

Having established a strong relationship with [Google Cloud](#) Premier Partner [Searce](#) when we deployed Google Cloud infrastructure to run our business, we turned to them again to help with this project.

Searce recommended we integrate Google Maps Platform [Mobility services](#) into our mobile app for precise mapping and location services. This would help us build trust by living up to our promises to customers about the cost of trips and paying captains fairly for the distances they travel.

Mobility services were the best fit for us for several reasons, including real-time traffic updates and predictive capabilities that enable captains to avoid congestion due to peak-hour traffic flows, accidents, construction works, and more.

In addition, because most of our captains, customers, and staff were already familiar with the Google Maps interface from personal use and its operation within our business, adapting to its functionality integrated into our app would ease adoption.



Reducing captains' calls and improving retention

Working closely with Searce, we ran a short proof of concept exercise in two cities that demonstrated significant improvements in key metrics. For example, the percentage of calls to our call center incoming from captains who needed support with unclear pickup directions used to make up 5% of all calls we received. With Mobility services' Addresses & Location Context, this has fallen to less than 1%.

This lowers our call center costs and because our captains spend less time identifying and traveling to the correct pickup locations, they can make more trips, consequently earning more. As a result, fewer captains drop out of the system and our recruitment costs are reduced.

Fleet Analytics & Debugging has increased our visibility of captains' locations from 60% to 95%, enabling us to better match captains with customers and increase the number of customer orders we fulfill each day.

Increasing the accuracy of distances, routes, and timings when matching captains to customers benefits both cohorts. Captains are more confident in their earning capacity while customers are assured they will be picked up and taken to the correct destination by the fastest route, at the price promised.

Forging a reputation as a business that cares

We are also adding safety features that alert customers and their emergency contacts if a captain deviates significantly from the designated route. This reinforces our reputation as a business that cares about its customers and enables them to access the taxi services they need daily.

With Mobility services capabilities integrated into our mobile app, we're now looking at opportunities to diversify our business, including integrating package deliveries with customer rides and expanding our car-sharing services that already operate in India's largest cities.

Mobility services enable us to effectively combine customer journeys with parcel deliveries to help captains increase their earnings, and seamlessly manage the permutations of picking up and dropping off multiple people to different destinations.

Google Maps Platform has been the central pillar throughout this journey, and Searce has played a key role in augmenting our app with world-class location and mapping services. We look forward to continuing on this journey together.

Customers

Display the ideal location

Offer efficient routes

Transportation & Logistics

Routes

Get going with Google Maps Platform

Get started

Contact sales



*Free usage refers to monthly calls available at no cost. Essentials Map Tiles APIs provide up to 100,000 calls at no cost per SKU per month.

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