

'Ubernomics' Draws Auto, Digital, Sharing Brands Together in New Ways

Author : Dale Buss

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Count **BMW** as the latest auto company to participate in the new sharing economy and figure if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

The company's **MINI brand** plans to help its customers [rent](#) out their vehicles like **Uber** drivers rent their spare seats and **Airbnb** does with lodging space. **MINI** will supply systems that accept payment and track vehicles to make sure they aren't stolen, and if the whole platform works, **BMW** will expand the service to its namesake luxury-car **brand** at little cost to owners.

"It's going to be kind of like **Airbnb** on wheels," **Peter Schwarenbauer**, the **BMW** executive who oversees **MINI**, [told Bloomberg](#) at the Beijing auto show. "There'll be those who say, 'Never, ever will I lend my car to strangers.' Then there'll be others who love the idea of halving their leasing rate."

With its inaugural [ReachNow](#) car-sharing service just launched in Seattle, **BMW** has become one of the most aggressive automakers at exploring possibilities in the growing mobility services sector where the traditional car industry is trying to compete with the likes of **Uber**, **Lyft** and other providers. As "**Ubernomics**" [spreads](#) across global business, it is forcing big companies to find ways to participate in the **socialization** of assets and to leverage their **brands**, experience and other attributes to compete with newer companies that are launching **digitally** and transforming the way the world works.

<https://youtu.be/P0GFUN3GrHY>

This is occurring in ways big and small. **Lyft**, for example, has [launched](#) its first national TV **advertising** campaign in which it positions its ride-sharing services as an antidote to the absurdity of traffic. It certainly helps **Lyft's** efforts that **General Motors** recently invested \$550 million in the startup, which remains much smaller than **Uber**.

The ad campaign "represents the next logical step along the road of just becoming a great global **brand** and really being a big part of the conversation that's happening right now about culture and transportation and how all of this stuff is evolving for a generation," **Jesse McMillin**, **Lyft's** creative director [told Adweek](#).

The once-distinct verticals that now comprise the mobility services industry are coming together in other ways as well. On Tuesday, **Lyft** and **Uber**, along with **Ford**, **Volvo** and **Google**—a really interesting grab-bag of partners—announced that they’re [forming](#) a “coalition” to urge federal action on self-driving cars, specifically to push for a clear set of federal standards whose adoption would promote the safe and quick adoption of autonomous driving. Former top federal auto-safety official **David Strickland** will be the counsel and front man for the group.

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