



The Trusted Platform for  
Business Spend Management

Uber

# Uber Driving Greater Spend Under Management

COUPA'S SPEND PLATFORM ACCELERATES STRATEGIC GROWTH

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### STEERING UBER WITH CONFIDENCE

Founded in 2009, Uber has established itself among an elite band of consumer names that are synonymous with the service they provide. The ride hailing organization operates in 85 countries and 700 cities worldwide. They also deliver food, groceries, and other essentials, and are expanding into other industries such as freight. In 2021 its revenues were \$17.46 billion.


Uber operates globally on a large scale. Because of its broad geographical presence and the very localized nature of their business, Uber operates in a very extensive global footprint and processes thousands of Purchase Orders, invoices, payments and cash recons while serving 13,000 internal requestors.

Uber's relationship with Coupa began prior to its IPO, when the Finance and Procurement teams needed to put controls in place to prepare for public markets and global scale.

Andrea Casella, Director, Global P2P at Uber leads the company's procurement strategy and team. "Our goals are to do things better, faster, and cheaper at every step of the process, while maintaining controls and satisfying the business rules that we've set out to achieve. We strive for best-in-class transactional excellence and have global standards, but we can never forget that we need to be able to deal with local relevance and regional nuances."

Similar to other tech companies, Uber operates in a very fast-moving environment and requires highly scalable processes to sustain this path. As the environment has changed following the COVID 19 pandemic, Coupa became an important platform to support Uber's shift to balanced growth with a free cash flow initiative.





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### **AUTOMATING FOR THE FUTURE**

Prior to the Coupa implementation, Uber lacked centralized processes and relied on highly manual transactions and processes resulting in long cycle times, late payments, excess back office costs, and low customer satisfaction scores from internal users and suppliers. They needed a “one-stop-shop” to order goods and services which would help them get ready for IPO while complying with Spend Authority Matrix controls and Segregation of Duties baked into the process across their Oracle ERP. The company’s IT strategy required fast time-to-value and low application administration costs.

Using the Coupa platform, Andrea and his team implemented standard, consistent processes, alongside significant levels of automation to drive greater spend under management in a short period of time - essentially building an infrastructure for standardization and scalability to sustain an exponential growth.

The global implementation of Coupa took less than a year and the ease of configuration continues after initial deployment. “Compared to other more traditional environments that I’ve been exposed to where adding any enhancement or feature would require being slotted into a very fixed and rigid release window, Coupa offers the ability to tweak your business rules in a very flexible way and to tailor it to your buying groups or entities on-the-go” shares Andrea.



**13,000**  
internal requestors



Customer satisfaction results from Uber community over

85%

## SUSTAINING GROWTH

Uber went public in 2019. The period immediately prior to IPO was an exceptionally busy time for Andrea who had recently joined the company. "Getting IPO-ready means ensuring that you have the right structure and the proper controls in place. You must conduct the proper diligence into reviewing those controls, while you also satisfy your internal policies" describes Andrea.

Coupa enables Uber to have all the necessary controls, providing visibility for the finance team to streamline accruals, and reporting to measure progress towards ESG goals. Uber regularly reports on their diverse spend and Coupa delivers the dashboards and scoring methodologies they need, out-of-the box

## SHARING EASY AUTOMATION ACROSS M&A

Most people associate Uber with ride sharing, but it has several other significant business lines such as food and package delivery, courier services, and freight transportation. Diversification, driven by a series of mergers and acquisitions, has played a vital part in Uber's success in the ultra-competitive transportation space.

"We've had a pretty heavy period of M&A over the last couple of years," points out Andrea. "For every acquired company, our goal is always to integrate the joining employees onto the Coupa platform. This means the joiners can view and use the same procurement channels and catalog content as existing Uber employees. Using Coupa makes the integration and the transition of the newly acquired company onto Uber much easier," discloses Casella.

## FOCUSING ON PROFITABILITY

With the economic downturn, Uber's Procurement, Finance and IT teams shifted from focusing on global expansion and growth to profitability. Digitizing manual processes resulted in hands-free PR processing and the vast majority of invoices processed as no touch or low touch. Channeling all addressable spend through Coupa as pre-approved, PO-backed spend resulted in greater spend visibility, compliance, and significant savings for the company.

IT also benefits from improved control with Uber's "No-PO/No-Pay" policy by making it easier to channel needs to approved vendors and avoid "shadow IT". Finance Operations was instrumental in a shift to issuing virtual cards in order to increase rebates and reduce the need to enable one-time suppliers. Internal teams used Coupa's Insights and Prescriptions to determine their roadmap for future projects, and more.

"To us, scale is being able to absorb higher volumes while remaining headcount neutral and to continue to reduce transactional costs while maintaining the necessary controls. So we're at a very healthy level of automation, offering ever increasing value at ever decreasing costs of operations," says Andrea.

## THE CLEAR ROAD AHEAD

As Uber looks to the future, the complexity of international operations and expansion into new lines of business remains top-of-mind. This complexity combined with the company's focus on free cash flow mean that platforms such as Coupa must be able to scale and support new and changing needs without excessive cost or IT support. "I've never seen other tools being quite as simple out of the box to configure in such an agile way, to satisfy pretty much any of the business rules you can think of," notes Andrea, who highlights ease of use, user experience, and community benchmarks as the key benefits Coupa delivers over rivals. "Once you have implemented Coupa you don't need to have a whole lot of IT support. You can make tweaks to your business rules, you can adjust your processes, you have the ability to make the changes you want to make. With Coupa we definitely have that agility."

At Uber, Coupa is a truly end-to-end platform offering agility and flexibility to future proof Procurement and Finance. Uber monitors employee perceptions of the platform every six months, asking users to rate their experiences of purchasing services or goods. "Throughout the last few years, we've only seen an improvement in those results," concludes Andrea.



Less than  
**5 DAYS**  
of order processing  
cycle-time



# About Coupa

Coupa is the cloud-based Business Spend Management (BSM) platform that unifies processes across supply chain, procurement, and finance functions. Coupa empowers organizations around the world to maximize value and operationalize purpose through their business spend.

Coupa's community of 3,000+ customers use the platform to maximize the value of over \$4T of direct and indirect spend to date.

For more information, visit [coupa.com](https://coupa.com).



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