

# *Uber-Mobility Is The New Catchphrase In Global Mobility - But Are The Apps And Robots Here To Stay?*

**Uber-mobility is becoming a new catchphrase in the world of global mobility as technology and innovation continues to inspire change. But are apps, virtual reality and even robots the future of the industry - or just a temporary fad?**

Lisa Johnson, Global Practice Leader, Consulting Services, at Crown World Mobility, has more than 18 years of experience in the field and provides the inside track on how a love of technology by modern day assignees – and a desire to be in control of their own relocation – is changing the face of global mobility programmes..

## **Can You Explain Exactly What Uber-Mobility Is?**

It is fundamentally a concept or metaphor for ultra-modern techniques being used in global mobility. The concept is based around how technology is changing, how people access information and how they make purchases. There is an increasing trend towards people using apps and of transactions taking place in real-time.

## **Who Is Driving It?**

I would say millennials are at the core of the trend, they demand real-time data and mobile services and like to be more hands-on than assignees of the past. But there is a business aspect, too, with companies keen to provide low-cost solutions – especially for early career employees, new hires and self-initiated moves. The evidence at the moment is uber-mobility is catching on quickly with assignees of all generations.

## **What Are The Key Technologies Which Are Helping Define Uber-Mobility?**

Apps such as Uber, Airbnb and Dolly are driving the industry forward, with global mobility programmes and global mobility experts attempting to offer services which compete with those apps.

## **What Would You Say Are The Positives Of Uber-Mobility For Assignees?**

Millennial assignees have a 'do it yourself'

mentality and see using apps to plan their move as part of the experience. They feel more in control of the process and feel the programme becomes more personalised when they have options in their grasp.

## **And What About The Positives For Global Corporations?**

It's all about saving money and increased flexibility. But it's also good for recruitment. It can be very hard to recruit millennials in locations outside of main cities and employers must think outside of the box and provide enticing benefits to attract millennials. Technology can be a big draw.

## **There Must Be Some Downsides, Though. It Can't Be All Good?**

That's fair to say. For assignees it can mean no vetted experts to talk to and no personal touch. Apps are not designed to work around people with families, are not interactive and lack the 'human' element. For corporations, these apps are not made by mobility companies, therefore they lack expertise. There are also debates around how far duty of care extends. Should businesses be tracking employees using GPS? Or is this infringing the privacy of employees? So there are some challenges ahead.

## **How Will Uber-Mobility Develop - What Technology Could Further Impact Global Mobility In Future? Could We See The Use Of Virtual Reality Technology?**

Virtual reality will almost definitely play a role in the future of uber-mobility in future. There is already existing technology in the gaming industry and this type of virtual reality could be used as a means of providing virtual reality tours when it comes to decision making for assignees. For example, looking at property and local amenities.

## **Is There Any Data Which Measures The Effectiveness Of Uber-Mobility Compared With More Traditional Methods? For Instance, Is It Lowering The Number Of 'Failed' Assignments When The Assignee Comes Home Early?**

No, this will need to be developed as a

result of a shift in the industry caused by technological changes. With regards to safety and security – there may be some horror stories arising out of 'DIY' assignments lacking professional mobility input.

## **Can You See A Time When The Desire Of Millennials To Do Everything Themselves Starts To Change? Could There Eventually Be A Kick-Back?**

Yes, this is likely to happen although it's hard to provide a timescale. This is a cheaper way to move young people without the need for 'hand-holding' throughout the experience.

## **Paint Us A Picture Of A Global Mobility Of The Future. What Do You Think It Will Look Like? Where Else Could Technology Make An Impact In Future?**

In the next five years it is likely that the traditional method will become a 'VIP' experience and the new, cost-saving methods will become normal. A good example of this is how quickly Facebook went from being a new quirky platform to the norm, where you can find everyone including your grandma posting.

## **What's The Most Innovative Thing You've Ever Seen In A Global Mobility Programme?**

A robot on a mini Segway which can travel around the office to visit different people. You can't get much more futuristic than that!



**LISA JOHNSON**

Global Practice Leader, Consulting Services, at Crown World Mobility, a global company which helps corporations manage global talent. She has more than 18 years of experience in the industry and has been with Crown since 2012.  
[www.crownworldmobility.com](http://www.crownworldmobility.com)