



Designing Worker-Centric Labor Markets

Ali Alkhatib

Stanford University, FUSE Labs

`ali.alkhatib@cs.stanford.edu`
`@aliaalkhatib_`

November 13, 2015

Roadmap

Personal background

Vision of cooperatives

Fieldwork

What we've learned

Intangible

Tangible

Where we're going

Wrap-up

Personal background

- ▶ Computer Science at Stanford
- ▶ FUSE Labs (Microsoft Research)
- ▶ Collective action (Dynamo)
- ▶ Anthropology at UC Irvine

[my] Vision of cooperatives

- ▶ We all want to see better “gig” labor markets.
- ▶ Laws protecting these workers have been slow to emerge.
- ▶ Ideas can propagate faster than laws and regulations can.
- ▶ Let's **demonstrate** that cooperative markets can compete with adversarial ones.

Fieldwork

1. Find participants — *spending weeks making inroads*
2. Participant–observation — *early mornings working dispatch*
3. Participatory design — *designing with **partners**, not clients*

What we've learned

Design considerations

Important issues for increasingly marginalized workers:

- ▶ How to design for constructive feedback
- ▶ The social dilemma of work dispatch
- ▶ Managing customer expectations
- ▶ More

What we've learned

Things you can run

Mock-up of a mobile app designed with workers and advocacy groups as *peers*

The mock-up shows a mobile application interface with three main sections:

- Schedule a Cleaning:**
 - Header: "What times are you available for your cleaning?"
 - Home Information: 123 fake street, San Jose, CA. Approximate duration: 4 hours.
 - Available Cleaning Times:
 - Sep 25 at 8:00 AM (Expected finish: 12:00 PM)
 - Sep 25 at 12:00 PM (Expected finish: 4:00 PM)
 - Sep 27 at 9:00 AM (Expected finish: 1:00 PM)
 - Navigation: A blue button with a right-pointing arrow.
- ongoing work:**
 - Header: "tasks"
 - bathroom:
 - clean toilet
 - clean sink
 - replace toilet paper
 - living room:
 - find remote controls
 - vacuum
 - rotate cushions
 - Actions: "report a problem" (red button) and "finished" (green button).
- Worker Feedback:**
 - Header: "Worker Feedback"
 - good job: A slider control.
 - the worker was as qualified as they claimed: A slider control.
 - the worker was hard-working: A slider control.
 - Feedback questions:
 - i'd hire this person again
 - How could the worker improve?
 - What did this worker do particularly well?
 - Action: "submit feedback" (blue button).

Where we're going

- ▶ Working on **collective governance**
 - ▶ Working with a small group of workers
- ▶ We need to think ahead and build technical system:
 - ▶ code: github → [alialkhatib/workerCoop](#)
- ▶ Interested in contributing (to either)?
Contact me — ali.alkhatib@cs.stanford.edu

Questions?

- ▶ name: Ali Alkhatib
- ▶ email: ali.alkhatib@cs.stanford.edu
- ▶ twitter: [@alialkhatib_](https://twitter.com/alialkhatib_)
- ▶ these slides [pdf]:
<https://al2.in/media/presentations/PlatformCooperativism.pdf>
- ▶ slide source [L^AT_EX]:
<https://al2.in/media/presentations/PlatformCooperativism.tex>