

# TAXI TECHNOLOGY PARTNER GUIDE

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Changing your taxi dispatch provider can be daunting. There are many factors to consider, and if you aren't technically minded then it can seem like a minefield with providers all promising you the world at next to no cost! To make things easier for you, Sherlock Taxi have put together this handy guide to make sure you've got everything covered when it comes to evaluating potential new software partners.



# Bookings

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- ① **Booking Channels** **Which channels** do you currently use and want to use in the future? Does the provider offer **phone, IVR, app** and **web** for retail and corporate clients, for example?
- ① **Booking types** **What types of bookings** do you need your software system to support? For example, **pre-bookings, streel hails, ASAP** or **return bookings**
- ① **Priority customers** Do you have a **system of customer grading** in place? For example, if you have a number of corporate accounts, then these would need prioritising over retail bookings in the event of a shortage of cars. **Can the provider support this?**
- ① **Booking confirmations** Can the system support **automatic text message** notifications to confirm bookings?
- ① **Preferences** Most providers allow for **special instructions** such as requesting a driver with a baby seat – but does the **system automatically match** these preferences to suitable vehicles?

# Dispatch

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- ① **Automatic dispatch** If you want to grow your business and remain competitive in these challenging times, you need to think about how to **automate more of your bookings** and the booking process as a whole. **What is the average percentage** of automation that providers' existing clients are achieving?
- ① **Capacity management** **What functionality** does the system have to intelligently manage supply and demand of bookings?

- ⓘ Live vehicle mapping and tracking with ETAs  
Does the **smartphone app** come with live vehicle mapping? Is the **app providing real-time** ETAs based on the driver's actual location and Google traffic information?
- ⓘ Ability for driver and customer to call each other  
**Can customers and drivers call each other** without revealing their personal phone numbers? Or in other words, does the provider offer **phone masking**?
- ⓘ Integrated with real-time flight information providers  
If you do a lot of airport work, then you may want to consider a provider who has **real-time integration with a flight checker** such as FlightStats or FlightAware.
- ⓘ Visibility of the fleet  
Does the provider offer a **map or visual** which allows the control room to quickly view the location of all vehicles on shift?

## Pricing

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- ⓘ Pricing calculation methods  
**How do you price your jobs?** For example, does the provider support time-based and GPS based fare calculations? Do you have maximum mileage pricing for particular jobs and can this be supported by the potential suppliers you are talking to?
- ⓘ Flexible tariffs  
Do you have **different pricing** tariffs based on different client accounts or vehicle types? What about different tariffs depending on the time of day?  
  
Does the provider offer '**tariff modifiers**' such as the flexibility to add promotions or special Christmas pricing without having to change all pricing tariffs?
- ⓘ Promotions  
Can you integrate promotions such as **e-vouchers** and **promo codes** into bookings? Can these be entered via app and web as well?

- ① Driver wages Does the system **automatically calculate** these ready to be quickly reviewed and approved by a manager?
- ① Client invoicing Is the ability to produce **client invoices integrated in the system?**

## Customer booking apps

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- ① Flexibility Is the **app available on Android and iOS?** Can it be white-labelled and branded to look like **your own product?** Do you need the app to be available in **different languages** and is this possible with the providers you are talking to?
- ① Integration with the wider system Is the customer app **fully integrated with the wider dispatch system?** This is important as you don't want customers booking via the app to be given a different ETA to customers booking via web portal or telephone
- ① In-app notifications Will you have the ability to send **push notifications** to your customers to update them on the status of their vehicle?
- ① Payment types Can customers pay via **credit card, cash or PayPal** when booking via the app?
- ① Customer feedback Does the app allow customers **to rate drivers** and their journey Uber-style? Does it **offer a lost property log** which integrates with the backend system?

## Web portal

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- ① Integration with the wider system Is the web portal **fully integrated with the wider dispatch system?** Like the customer app, you don't want clients booking via the web and receiving a different ETA to if they had booked via a different booking channel such as telephone

- ⓘ Web kiosks  
Is it possible to install **kiosks in supermarkets** and similar locations which take the customer directly to your private hire company?
- ⓘ Differentiation between corporate and consumer accounts  
Can **individuals log in** via a corporate or personal account?
- ⓘ Booking widget  
Can the **booking portal be embedded in partner sites**?

## Driver app

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- ⓘ Flexibility  
Can the app be **white-labelled**? Do you need the app to be available in **different languages** and is this possible with the providers you are talking to?  
Can drivers **chat directly with the control room from the app**?
- ⓘ Visibility  
Can drivers view their **job history** from within the app?  
Can drivers view the **busiest areas** to help increase their chances of being allocated a trip quickly?
- ⓘ Driver rules & permissions  
Can separate **user rights with different levels** of access be set up for drivers? For example, can you ban drivers' access to special, advanced features as a performance management tool?
- ⓘ Special job types  
Does the provider's app include **bidding functionality** and **job offers** with an Uber-style workflow?

## Third party integrations

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- ⓘ Flexibility  
**What kind of third party integrators does the provider have?** For example, for telephony, credit card payments, SMS messaging services, flight checkers and aggregators.

- ① Flexibility  
If you're using a third party provider that the supplier isn't integrated with, are they **flexible enough** to do a **bespoke integration** for you if required?
- ① Partner integrations  
Does the provider **offer integrations** and **work-sharing** with their existing clients?

## Analytics

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- ① Business intelligence  
Can you **access** and **export data** to provide valuable information to your business?
- ① Bespoke reporting  
If there is particular information you're looking for that isn't part of a general report, does the provider have the **option to create bespoke reports** for you?
- ① Flexible KPIs  
Can the system **monitor criteria** for you such as driver, customer and call centre performance?

## Technology

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- ① Customised system  
Is the system **out-of-the-box** or **can it be customised** to suit your specific business needs?
- ① Product updates  
How often does the provider schedule **software updates**? What kind of **downtime** is involved with this? Does the provider **charge for this**?
- ① Access to development team  
Will the provider give you **direct access to the development team** to discuss customisations and bespoke work?
- ① System hardware  
Do you have a system which can **survive hardware failure or breakdown**?

# Implementation

So you've used our guide above and found the perfect provider for your business. But have you thought about installing your new system? It is worth talking to suppliers about the level of provision they can provide when it comes to the implementation phase. Some points to consider:

- ⓘ **Business scoping**

Will the supplier perform a **full business scoping exercise** to ensure that their software can perform everything you need it to do?
- ⓘ **Bespoke development**

If you have any **functionality requirements** that the supplier can't deliver on, are they willing and able to do **bespoke development work** for you?
- ⓘ **Hosting**

Is the **system cloud** or **client hosted**? If you would like cloud hosting, would you like the provider to be able to arrange this for you?
- ⓘ **Implementation assistance**

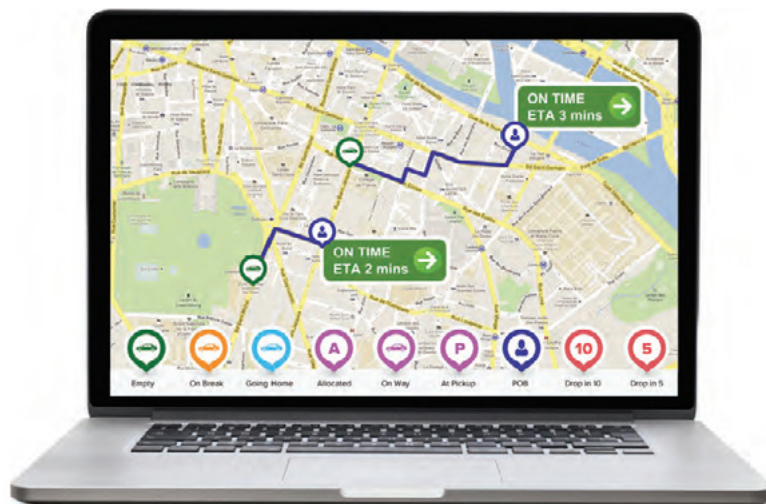
Will the provider **help you** to set up and configure your new software accordingly? Can this be **done remotely** or **onsite**?
- ⓘ **Data migration**

Will the supplier **migrate your data from your previous system** over to your new software or will you be left to manually enter everything by yourself?
- ⓘ **Training**

What kind of **training** will the company offer to your office staff and drivers? Will the sessions and supporting materials be **tailored to your business**?
- ⓘ **Ongoing support**

What kind of **support** will you receive after the go-live process?
- ⓘ **Credibility**

What kind of **experience** does the vendor have? For example, **how long have they worked in the taxi industry**? What do their existing customers **think of them**?



There is a lot to consider when choosing a new taxi dispatch provider but it doesn't have to be scary if you know the right questions to ask.

If you would like more information, or an informal chat about your business needs, email us at [demo@sherlocktaxi.com](mailto:demo@sherlocktaxi.com)

Alternatively, we'll be happy to chat on the phone, please call +44 (0) 20 3214 5110