

Development of a Mobile Auto Repairs and Maintenance System in Nigeria

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Abstract

The Nigerian economy depends strongly on the functionality of its road transport system. About 90% of the macroeconomic activities in Nigeria depend on automobiles as means of mobility (Odeleye, 2000). As a fast growing economy with emerging middle class (Uzonwanne, 2011), Nigeria will witness an increase in standard of living of its populace. This will affect car ownership. Nigeria spent approximately £1.57 billion (that is N400 billion naira) in the past two decades on car importation (Ughoro, 2011) but still witnesses slow growth in its repairs and maintenance services. Research revealed that the automobile repair workshops and technicians lack adequate working capital, which is poor given the amount invested in importation of automobiles. This translates to inadequate tools and equipment, lack of integrity, trust and structure.

The investment in car importation in Nigeria favours used vehicles (USA Trade online observed that about 90% of imported automobiles are used) (USA Trade On-Line, 2009). Advancement in automobile technologies has led to increased sophistication of modern automobiles. Thus, the need for advanced skills, techniques, and tools, which these automobile technicians cannot afford due to lack of adequate capital or funds. This poses the problem of choice for car owners, as increased sophistication (engine system, breaking system, etc) reduces the number of skilled technicians and hence, the risk of obtaining poor services. What is needed is a platform that will provide automobile owners access to skilled and validated automobile workshops and technicians with knowledge of relevant technology for the modern automobiles.

I intend to build a web and mobile-based application for the automobile repairs and maintenance industry that will serve as a middleman for all the stakeholders. It should allow workshops/ technicians to partner, share resources and coordinate certain activities to help boost the industry.

The proposed system will ensure the comfort and satisfaction of the growing middle class by providing quality services in a cost effective way, fleets and routine maintenance management, increased flexibility and reduced stress that will greatly save time and money. The automobile technician will benefit immensely as the system should provide favourable operating atmosphere for automobile technicians and workshops operators/ owners such that it can easily access credit facilities, trainings and partnership with reputable foreign and local companies.