

Matchbox app matches containers with transporters



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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It seems there is no area in South Africa where innovation and creativity isn't disrupting the industry.

Especially in the logistics space, there's been forward-thinking individuals and companies all aiming to make the industry more efficient. Just look at [Empty Trips](#), and [Linebooker](#).

But the most recent one I came across is Matchbox which was launched just last month. The new app aims to connect shippers and transporters directly, in real time.

The idea for Matchbox was conceived in April 2016 by a team with over 40 years' combined experience in logistics in Africa. Anton Potgieter, founder of Matchbox, says they could clearly see the gap in the market. The team started Matchbox to simplify the current process to find, book, track, and pay for road transport in Africa. The name was derived from the app's ability to literally match "boxes" or containers with transporters.



Development was finalised in January 2017 and, post a robust and thorough beta testing period, Matchbox launched publicly in August 2017.

I asked Potgieter a few questions about the solution and why he thinks innovation in the industry is so important:

■ ***There's been a lot of innovation in the logistics space - with many solutions borrowing ideas from the likes of Uber and AirBnB. What makes your particular solution unique?***

The Matchbox idea is for sure borrowing from the on-demand idea started by Uber. What makes us unique is that we took this concept and adapted it to the transport industry, specialising in sea freight containers for imports and exports, creating a unique innovation for shippers and transporters.

■ ***Why is it necessary for companies in the transport and logistics industry to start thinking outside the box (excuse the pun) and start innovating?***

The logistics industry is at the forefront of the economy and always feels the downturn or upturn in the economy first, as we service all sectors. In the current climate which had no real growth in the past five years, it's important to be able to offer unique solutions to everyday problems. This will add good value to your service offering in a saturated market.

The logistics sector is one of the last frontiers for digitalisation and there is a major digital rush coming for all players in the industry. Five years from now, all transport will be booked via market place platforms, not the way it is done today.

■ ***What inspires you to think differently and why?***

I think innovation and creative thinking is all around us, the secret lies in the implementation of those ideas.

■ ***What does the word innovation mean to you?***

To change the way we do things for the better.

According to the company, both transporters and shippers stand to benefit from this new mobile app as it aims to assist owner-operators, local, and regional fleets to increase their loads and expand their business.



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Transporters can look forward to “no more wasted space” by signing up for alerts to nearby jobs being auctioned to the best bidder while in turn typically offering shippers a lower rate than current industry standards.

Matchbox is available for Android and currently operates in the South African market. For more, go to www.matchbox.bid.

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.

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