

App facilitates quick local delivery by otherwise idle couriers



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According to [Postmates](#) co-founder Bastian Lehmann, retail stores spend an average of fifteen hours per month fulfilling shipping requests, which distracts from their main objective of selling. When a personal experience also highlighted the lack of easy ways to ship physical goods locally, Lehmann was inspired to create Postmates — a service that connects couriers and bike messengers in between jobs with local businesses looking to make short-range shipments.

San Francisco-based Postmates aims to benefit local businesses by facilitating the easy delivery of goods to customers, as well as enabling couriers to earn extra money. Currently only available in the San Francisco area, but with plans to expand, fifty businesses have signed up to the service so far. Retailers begin by accessing Postmates via the website or iPhone app. They then enter the pick-up and delivery locations, add a brief description with the option of including a photo, and schedule a delivery time. The request is submitted and received via iPhone by the thirty couriers already signed up to Postmates. Postmates estimate that at any one time there are fifteen to twenty couriers in between jobs and available to deliver. Once a courier has accepted the job, the retailer can see who and where they are, and each step of the delivery process is visible via the app. Each delivery costs USD 15 — although tiered pricing is planned for larger items — with a two hour maximum delivery time. The couriers using Postmates take on approximately five extra jobs each day, which equates to an additional USD 27,000 a year, and with an average delivery time of 37 minutes, businesses and their customers are likely to be satisfied by the service too. Postmates can also be used by individuals as well as businesses, and the company plans to expand to Android devices in the near future.

Postmates have capitalized on the downtime of an existing service, meaning set up and running costs are low as equipment and communication devices are already in place. Plenty here for businesses, couriers, and innovators to be inspired by!

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