Sendy launches ride-hailing feature
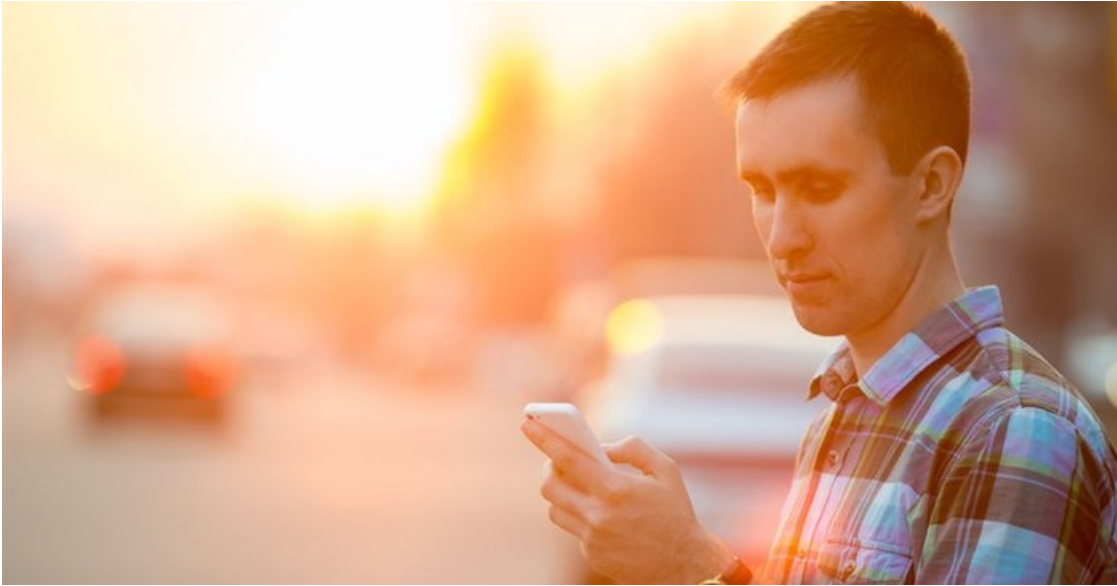
By Gabriella Mulligan

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Kenyan e-courier startup Sendy has announced it is to expand its services to include on-demand ride-hailing for passengers, with the new RIDE feature of its app.

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Launched in 2014, Sendy offers a marketplace for last-mile package delivery and logistics services, allowing customers to send packages and documents using a mobile application that connects them to motorcycle riders, and drivers of vans and pickup trucks. The startup said it has received numerous requests from its individual and corporate users for the platform to make passenger services available.

As such, Sendy said it will this week launch the RIDE feature of its app, enabling users to call taxis and motorcycle taxis (boda bodas). "We believe it's a natural extension of our core expertise to also connect our users to quality certified transportation providers," Sendy said.

Through the Sendy app, users will now be able to request a package DELIVERY using a motorcycle, van, pickup, or 3-ton truck, or a passenger RIDE with a boda boda or taxi.

The startup says RIDE service providers are vetted through an intensive process of documentation, exams, and weekly trainings, and are protected under passenger insurance. Sendy allows payment via cash, card, or M-Pesa. For the first

month of operation, customers will receive a 50% discount on RIDE services.

Disrupt Africa reported last November Sendy was the first startup to receive funding from the $1 million Safaricom Spark Fund, which aims to support mobile ICT startups in Kenya, and enable the development of innovative mobile solutions. The startup received an undisclosed amount of funding.