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# Car Sharing Could Change How We Get Around

Why buy a car when you can rent one?

by [Alex Zorn](#) Published January 21, 2021 04:45PM EST

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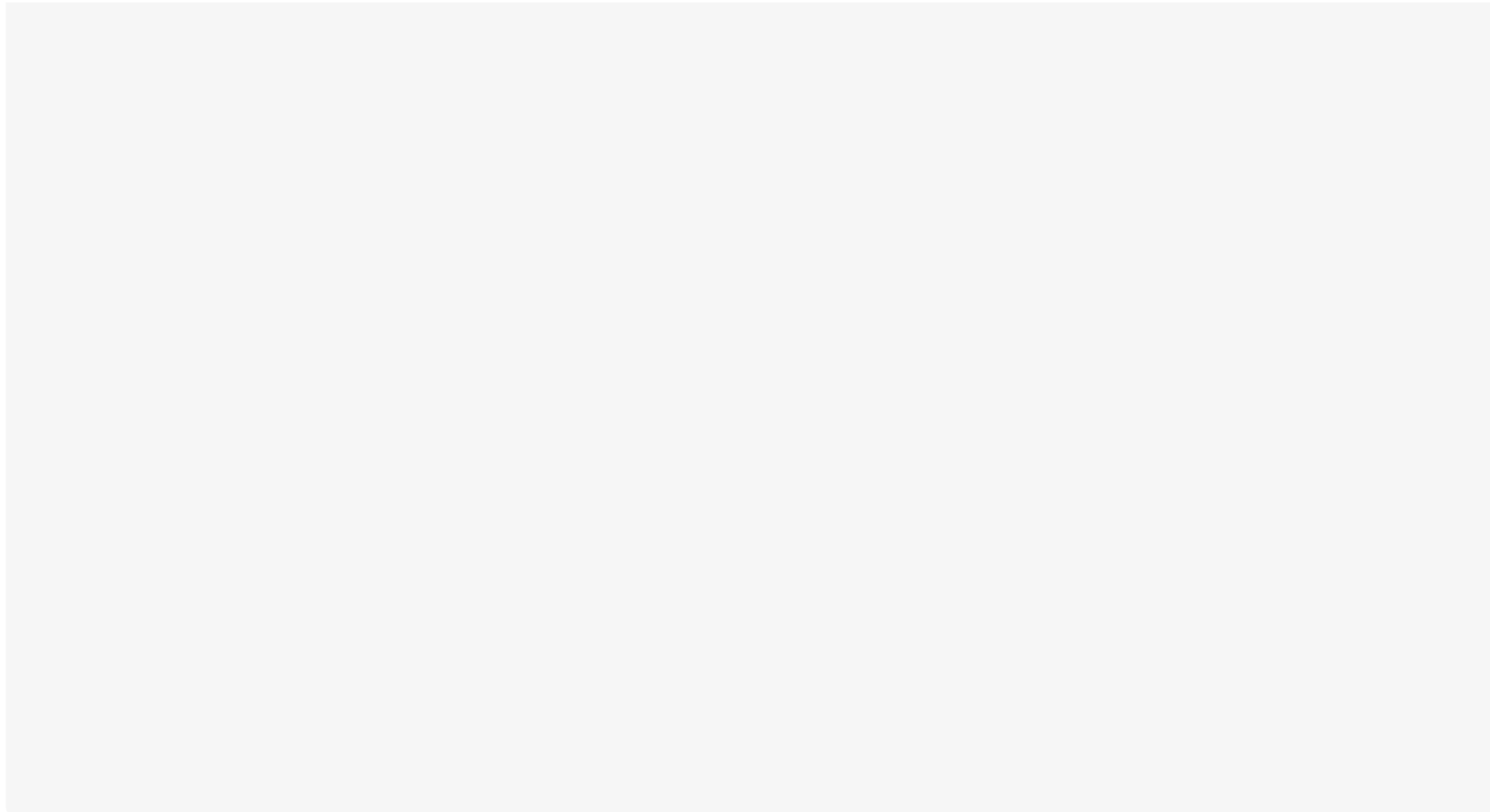
## Key Takeaways

Carsharing is a largely private car rental service that lets drivers rent cars by the hour from vehicle owners or rental companies.

Experts say carsharing is on the rise because it meets mobility needs and provides access to more vehicle choices.

Some users caution that carsharing may not be the best choice if you're a vehicle owner.





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Carsharing is becoming a popular way to solve the car ownership dilemma, and analysts expect the industry to continue to grow and innovate, but not all vehicle owners think carsharing is a great idea.

A recent study from market research company Frost & Sullivan found that the global carsharing market is expected to grow from over 7 million members and 112,000 vehicles in 2015, to 36 million members and 427,000 vehicles by 2025. With well established brands like Turo and Zipcar already leading the market, new apps entering the fray will need to build trust and get creative for owners to understand the value of carsharing.

"Broadly speaking, there are two types of car sharing services: peer-to-peer and business-to-consumer," [Ioannis Bellos](#), George Mason University School of Business associate professor, said in an email to *Lifewire*. Examples of P2P are Turo and Getaround, whereas Zipcar is an example of business-to-consumer.

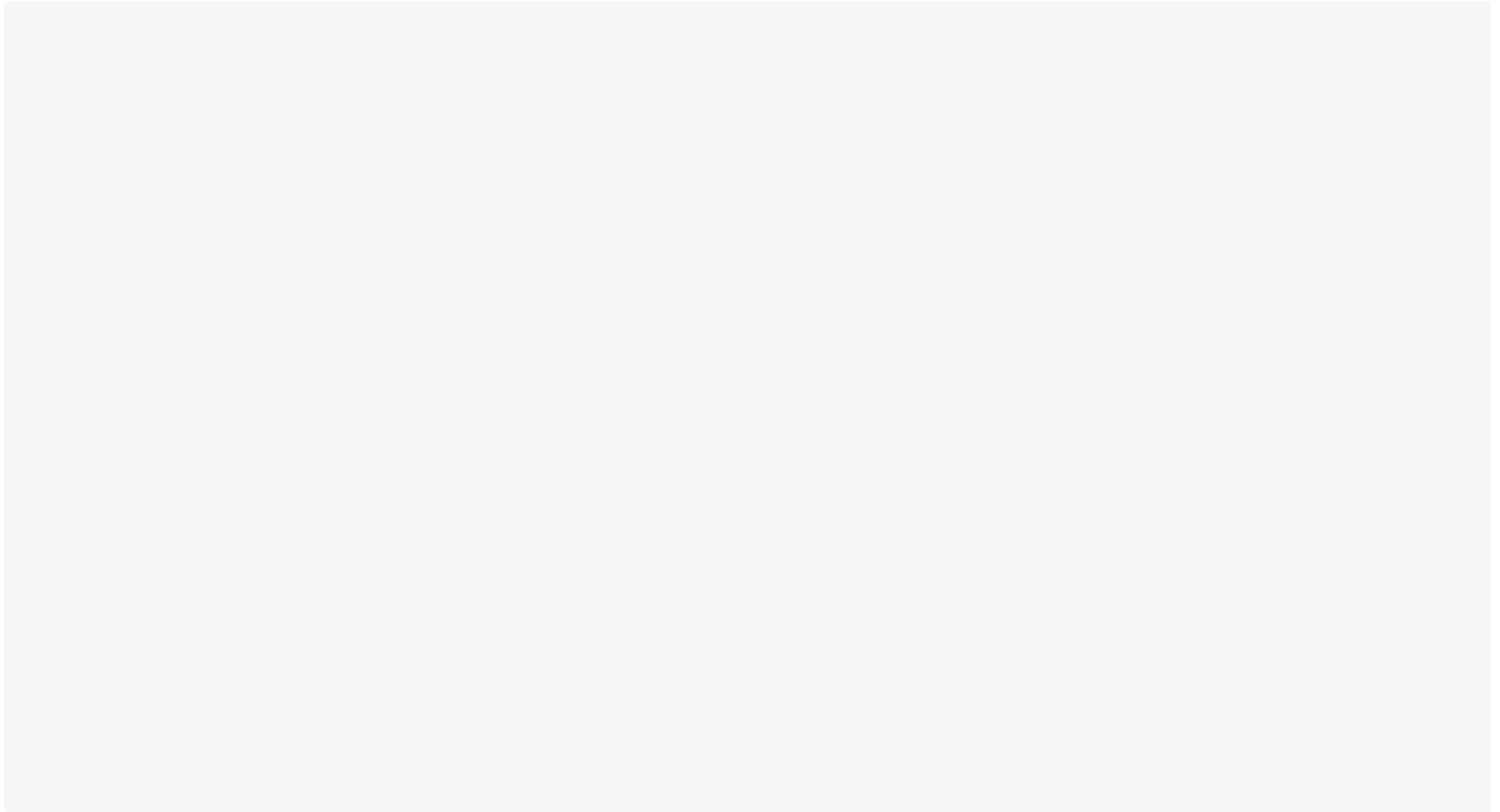
"In both programs users pay to drive a car they do not own," Bellos said. "Uber and Lyft give users the opportunity to meet daily mobility needs, but Turo offers longer-term rentals and provides access to more exotic car models."

## Carsharing Is Still Finding Its Niche

[The Wall Street Journal reports](#) that popular carsharing app Turo saw its first profitable quarter and increased revenue by 7% during the pandemic. The app provides car owners the chance to rent their vehicles out to any driver who also is using the app.

"I am not expecting things in this industry to settle any time soon," Bellos said. "I expect to see continued experimentation from third-party providers and car manufacturers with different mobility options. It is like a puzzle and the goal is to find out how the different pieces fit with each other."





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Not everyone likes the idea of using an app to share a vehicle with other people who don't have an owning interest in it.

"Don't rent your car unless you want it destroyed," Florida resident Mike Arman said in an email to *Lifewire*. "The people who benefit are the app providers and the borrowers, who get full control of an expensive and delicate asset for a few bucks."

Arman has been involved with the vehicle rental business a few times and doesn't offer rave reviews. In his experience, he feels the cars get abused if the owner is lucky, wrecked if they are not.

"If it's any kind of performance car, the very first thing they do is see how fast it will go. If it is an economy car it gets treated as a disposable item," he explained.

## What the Future Holds for of Carsharing

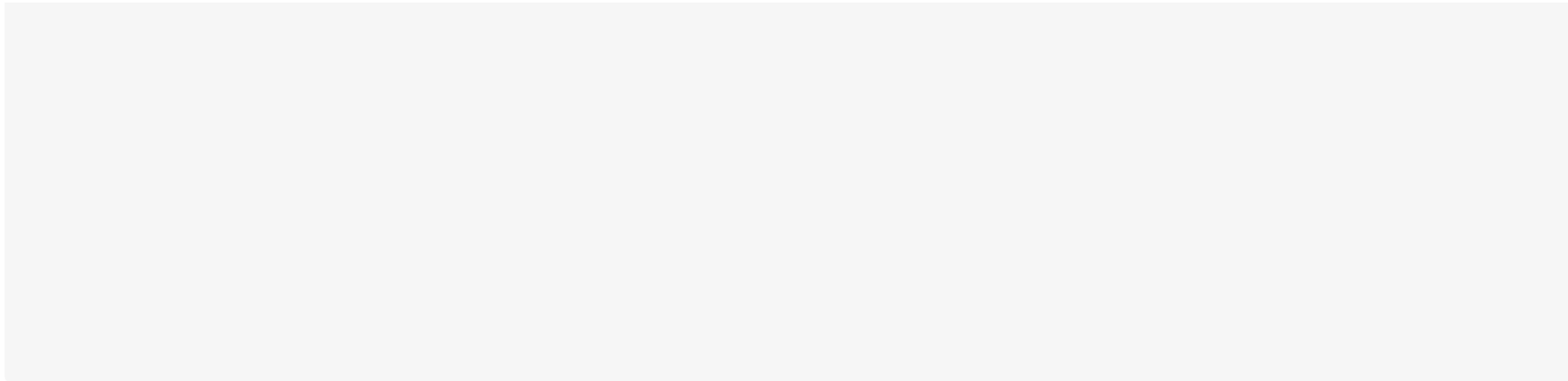
Conversely, Bellos sees only the possibilities. "I can't think of many reasons to not try a car sharing app," he said. "You can sign up, try it and if the value is not there, you can always think of the service as a backup option."

"I wouldn't be surprised if programs like Turo and Getaround are appealing to a wider age range given that they can provide access to an eclectic mix of cars."

Bellos said the success of new carsharing apps will depend on three things: selection, accessibility, and price.

Vehicle control and tracking app [Dronemobile](#), which allows you to connect your smartphone to your car, will be adding a carsharing option in April. The app allows drivers to start their car remotely, track its GPS location, and lock and unlock their vehicle with their smartphone.





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Justin Lee, First Tech marketing director, said in a phone conversation with *Lifewire* that Dronemobile will essentially allow car owners and renters to share car keys over the app. "It will make the entire rental process contactless and the owner won't even have to be present when the renter picks up the vehicle," he said.

Similarly seeking to forge its own creative path into the carsharing industry, MirrorTrip offers more of a "ride-switching" option for drivers. The app gives drivers options for one-way car rentals by coordinating with someone who's going in the opposite direction, making travel either way much more affordable for everyone involved.

"Our model serves a niche of carsharing, particularly to facilitate inter-city travel, something that is currently underserved by other car sharing alternatives," CEO and founder Reece Griffin said in an email to *Lifewire*.

Ultimately, carsharing has risks and advantages. It just might take some time for the industry to settle.

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