

MaaS GLOBAL

History of the company that started a revolution in the mobility industry



Notes from a CEO

There is a digital disruption going on in the mobility industry, similar to what happened in the telecom sector in the 90s. Our mission as a MaaS company is to fulfil our part in the goal we have set for the whole industry, which is to ensure people get the freedom of mobility they deserve without decrease in service level and while doing it sustainably.

For decades, private cars have been the representations of our freedom to move flexibly and efficiently, and it is time to change that. We are not against car ownership, but we do want to do better. The freedom of mobility should mean we can travel anywhere, at any time on a whim. But we have to start thinking about the sustainability of our mobility because right now what we see as freedom is becoming a hindrance to our ability to move about.

— *Sampo Hietanen*



whim
Mobility as a Service Platform

DESIGN FROM FINLAND



Whim's vision is to make cities more livable for all by offering a compelling alternative to car ownership. We do this by combining various public and private modes of transport in a city and offering them as a user-friendly monthly subscription service. Whim can shift the transport modal split towards more sustainable, shared, and active modes.

By doing so, we will eventually be able to repurpose urban land currently dedicated to car parking and multi-lane roads, reduce congestion, and make cities cleaner. At a societal level, Mobility as a Service will make our cities more fair and equitable by bringing affordable and inclusive mobility to more of its inhabitants.

Our choking cities



Cities are making continuous efforts to reduce congestion and improve mobility.

Car use is a major contributor to traffic congestion, air pollution, and noise. Public transport is often overcrowded and unreliable. Active modes like walking and cycling are often not used to their full potential.

All transportation and consumption growth continues, but most urban areas are not able to sustain this growth.

Design process

Our research showed that people mostly need change in their daily lives.

Public transport is changing from a service to a mobility solution, especially through shared services.

We designed a new system of shared mobility, based on real feedback.

We created a mobility as a service platform to develop a user-centered perspective for mobility.

What we have achieved

75 000+ users
4 million+ trips

Since 2016, we have been in 10 cities across Europe and Asia.

Whim is a leader in the MaaS market.

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Mobility

MaaS Global
Mobility as a Service
Whim - All

Producer
Director

Once upon a time...

...in 2006, a man sat on a plane going from London to Helsinki, looking at the clouds, sipping on the champagne first-class passengers were offered. He began to think of the people who usually traveled in first class, of all the consumers who used the transport services perhaps the most, and of those who controlled the mobility infrastructure. The services were still made around the idea of serving the machines, cars that needed to be able to get from place A to place B, forgetting to focus on how to simplify the lives of the people using them.

The man opened his laptop and began to sketch his idea to answer the problem. The next day, he presented this solution in a slideshow on the future of the transportation industry at Finnish Infrastructure day. During the following years, the idea morphed into a company, started a revolution in the mobility industry, helped change the political landscape around mobility in Finland, and gave name to what we now call mobility-as-a-service, MaaS to friends.

The telecom revolution begins

1990s Before mobility-as-a-service or any other services that could be controlled as easily as we can today, the telecom industry needed to change. In Finland, free competition and common technological standards in developing Nordic Mobile Telephony (NMT) laid the foundation for the mobility revolution that was to come.





New type of mobility emerges

2009 The Finnish Ministry published the first Strategy for Intelligent Transport, which stated that the basis of the transport system would be consumer-orientation aided by the new user-centric, intelligent transportation. The aim of the policy was to ensure safe travel and to maintain both transport and the transport system so that they are ecologically, socially and economically sustainable.

2010 Finland merged all agencies for railroads, seafaring, roads, air travel, and road vehicles into new two-mode organizations called Finnish Transport Infrastructure Agency and Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi) respectively. First in the world, Finland united the previously separate entities into a functioning whole.

2011 Sitra (The Finnish Innovation Fund) together with the Ministry of Transport and other governmental organizations published The Traffic Revolution, a paper that put the customer in the center of all transport and declared that mobility and logistics should be viewed, developed and utilized as services.

2012 Then Minister of Transport, Merja Kyllönen, seven other ministers and their staffs presented the parliament with outlines for the future of Finland's transport policies that defined the administration as facilitators of a more open, innovative culture.

2013 The name "MaaS" was finalized: after several suggestions, Minna Kivimäki, then Director General of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, made the decision for the whole world. The term mobility-as-a-service was born.

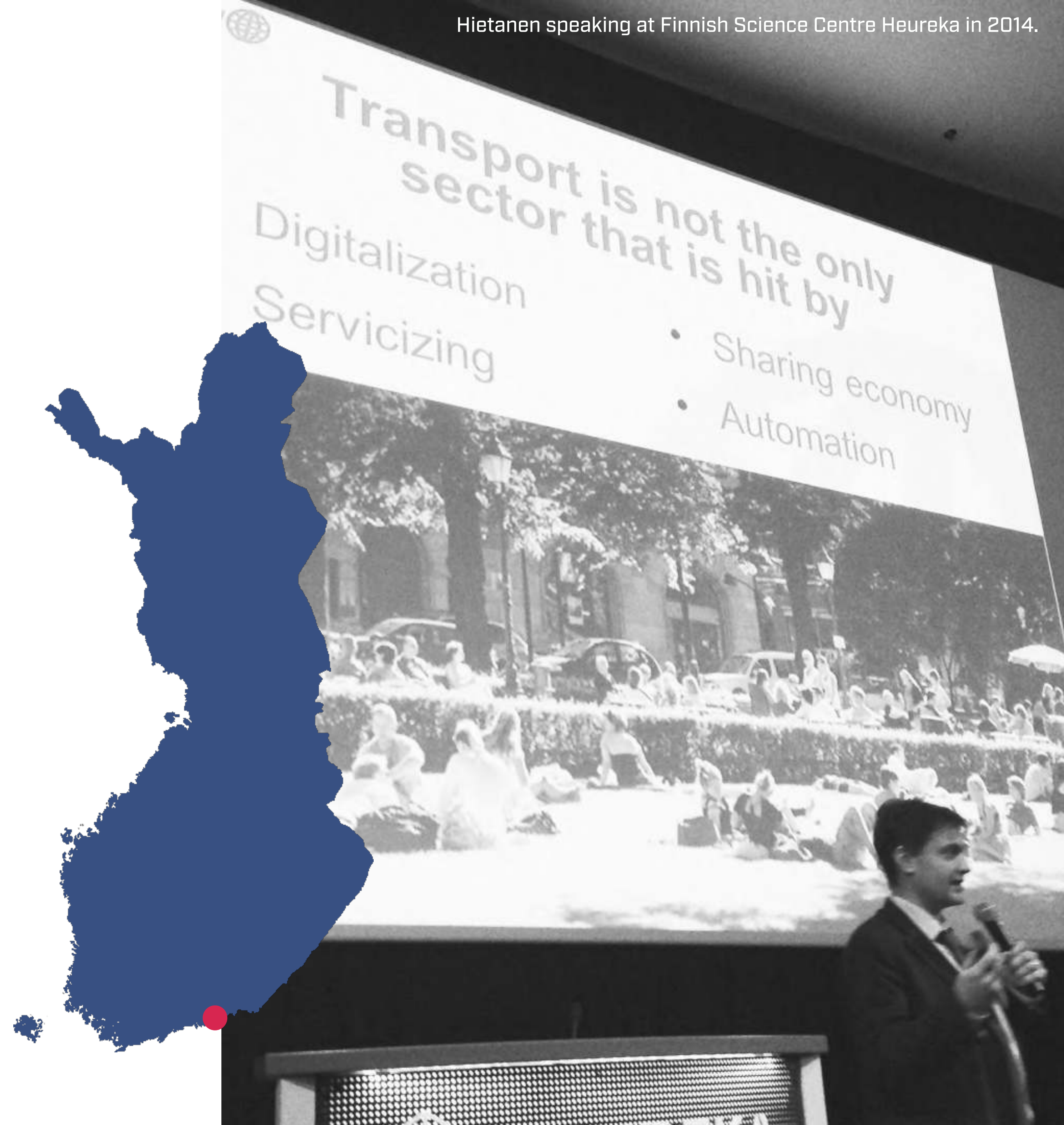
Gaining speed

2014 The man on the plane, then the CEO of ITS Finland, Sampo Hietanen wanted to present his idea to a wider audience and began to plan an event around it. With a green light from ITS chairman, Karri Salminen and aided by his then only other employee at the company he was planning to start, Jonna Heikkinen (then Pöllänen), Hietanen put together an event titled 'A Starting Event for the World's First Mobility as a Service Operator' at the Finnish Science Centre Heureka. Over 250 people came to listen to Hietanen talk about this new innovative solution for mobility, and soon after 24 representatives* of different organizations that had been present pledged 5,000 euros each to ensure the business took off.

Hietanen was not the only person to speak about MaaS by any means, but his future company and Finland were special in moving the idea from theory into practice. Helsinki provided the perfect testing platform with its existing mobility infrastructure, and Finland's positive history at the heart of the rising IT revolution ensured that authorities from private sector to politicians were eager to boost the concept.

That year, Sonja Heikkilä published her thesis on mobility-as-a-service, the first that got eyes to turn towards MaaS on a global scale and ensured the success story could truly start.

*Delta Capital Force Elisa, Ericsson, Goodsign, GoSwift, Helsingin seudun liikenne (Helsinki Regional Transport Authority), IQ Payments, Maanmittauslaitoksen Paikkatietokeskus (National Land Survey of Finland's Finnish Geospatial Research Institute FGI) Neocard, Mobisoft, OP Group, Ramboll, Secto, Semel, Siemens, Sito, Skedgo, Stratax, Suomen kasvukäytävä -verkosto (Growth Corridor Finland network), Taipale Telematics, Taksiliitto, Tampereen kaupunki (City of Tampere), TeliaSonera, Tuup, Uber





A community forms

2015 The money pledged by the 24 organizations at the event at Heureka funded the building of a business plan at consulting firm Eera (today Korkia) in the spring. Maas Global was officially founded on 4th of May, though the company was called MaaS Finland Oy at that point. Behind the scenes, the development for the new transport policy in Finland continued, and on 2nd of October MaaS Alliance was formed, and among the founders was Hietanen.

The first meeting on MaaS Alliance at European Congress In Glasgow in 2015.
In the picture: Sampo Hietanen and Anne Berner.

May the Force be with you

2016 The first employee (and incidentally, co-founder of the company) Kai Pyyhtiä joined MaaS Global on 1st of January. Sami Pippuri soon became the Chief Technical Officer and Jonna Heikkinen followed close behind, starting as Collaboration & Communications Manager. Together, they finalized the name for the product. In May, Heikkinen came up with an idea: "It should be called Whim."

That summer, then MaaS Finland Oy changed its name to MaaS Global and its product, Whim was introduced to the public at the Forum for Mobility and Society in Brussels.

First Whim ride was made in the summer, and the first commercial one in October. Awards began to pour in, among them Smart City Action Award and Nordic Smart Cities Award.

2017 New investment rounds ensured €14.5 million of raised funds, and a Whim pilot in Antwerp started in September.

At the same time, the Finnish government passed the Act on Transport Services. This made creating a completely new type of approach to mobility possible by gathering all legislation concerning mobility and transport under the same umbrella. Behind the legislation were concerns about climate change and the want to digitize and deregulate the industry in Finland. The act ensured more freedom of movement and competition in the mobility industry for the private sector that could not have gone against the public authorities before this.

2018 Less than a year after the first Whim ride, the app hit its first 1,000,000 rides made. Three months later, the number was two million. In April, micromobility options were introduced to the Whim users for the first time when Helsinki city bikes were added to the app in the Helsinki area. That spring, Whim was also launched in Birmingham and in Antwerp in the autumn. By August, MaaS Global had raised €23.5 million in total.




Hietanen at South Summit 2021.

Global shakeup

2019 The new year brought with it a major milestone when MaaS Global celebrated three million trips made on Whim. Another big launch took place in the autumn when Whim expanded to Vienna. By October, the company had raised €53 million in total.

2020 Covid-19 had a clear impact on the whole mobility industry as usage of public transport decreased and consumers began to look for new ways to travel. Bike rentals and purchases went up, and MaaS Global reacted quickly to the users' changed needs and increased the micromobility offer by adding TIER on Whim.

MaaS Global expanded to Japan first by starting a pilot with real estate giant Mitsui Fudosan in Kashiwanoha. In the piloted TownMaaS concept renting and other forms of mobility were combined and integrated in one application, Whim. Launch in the Greater Tokyo region followed that December.



You go for the thing that car actually represents. It's not the car itself. For people, a car is not the car. A car is our freedom, insurance of freedom to go anywhere at any time on a whim. We can do better than that."

— Sampo Hietanen

2021 In June, MaaS Global launched Whim in Switzerland with the support of a new investor, Vaudoise Group. Earlier in the spring, MaaS Global had acquired Spanish mobility startup Wondo and Ferrovial – Spain-based multinational focused on the transport infrastructure and urban services – became one of the shareholders of reference of the company, having been the owner of Wondo since its founding.

Onward, ever onward

2022 MaaS Global celebrates its 7th birthday in May this year, and over 20 million trips have already been made with the Whim app.

In March, MaaS Global acquired the leading Brazilian MaaS player, Quicko, gaining 500 000 new active monthly users and CCR – one of the largest infrastructure companies in Brazil – and J2L became stakeholders and investors in the company.



- building the world's first mobility ecosystem
- changing the way we move
- combining public and private transport providers



Maas GLOBAL

- founded in 2015
- CEO Sampo Hietanen
- 124 employees
- HQ in Helsinki, Finland
- creator of Whim-app



The Whim team.