

## There's probably an app for that – new solutions for old problems

**Level:** Advanced (C1-C2)

**Time:** Approximately 90 minutes

**Business topics:** logistics, technology, business solutions, (non-)traditional ways of working

**Business language:** useful business vocabulary, phrases and expressions, language to describe apps, Venn diagrams and graphs

**Activities:** key words, understanding the text, business language, discussion, talking about apps and describing them and their usages by means of venn diagrams and graphs

**Groups:** Whole class, one-to-one, small groups

**Overview:** This article discusses innovative business solutions to problems as well as the gig economy in general.

### 1. Warmer

- a. On a shared screen or board, collect all the feasible suggestions that students come up with about ways for you to safely and humanely transport a pet dog across a country or continent, before they scan the article to find out how the author transported her dog across the USA.

b.

**Key:** She employed a young couple to drive her dog across the country.

### 2. Key words

a.

**Key:**

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. dilemma     | 7. wiping out   |
| 2. relish      | 8. gig          |
| 3. ferry       | 9. striking     |
| 4. dubious     | 10. compensated |
| 5. brokerage   | 11. innovative  |
| 6. side hustle | 12. traits      |

### 3. Understanding the article

- a. With a partner, students first discuss the answers to the questions and then write them including as much information from the article as possible.

**Suggested Key:**

1. A golden retriever female dog called Charlie. She needed to transport her from New York to Denver.
2. She and her daughters had to unexpectedly fly to Denver. We don't know why exactly she had to go to Denver, but we know the trip was taken at short notice and that they had to stay there for a long period of time.
3. A friend suggested that there must be an app that could offer a solution to her dilemma, and there was. She discovered a site called Citizenshipper that brought her dog to her within three days. It cost a total of 984 US dollars.
4. The dog was transported by a young couple - Robert and his wife - in their car. They started offering the service as a way to combine making money and spending time together as a family with their 6-month-old baby (new offspring).
5. Short-term, contract work such as the one-off task of transporting the dog to Denver.
6. Young, relatively poor and non-white, e.g., Hispanics in the US.
7. The work is often insecure – you don't know when you will get your next job -, the pay is often bad, and the worker usually does not have a right to usual work benefits such as health insurance, holiday or sick pay.
8. They have the freedom to choose when they want to work. The work might fit better with their home and family situation and allow them to combine the two.

### 4. Business language

- a. Students find multi-word expressions and phrases in the article that match the meanings. The section numbers are given to help them.

**Key:**

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. at short notice  | 5. deep rooted          |
| 2. swallow the cost | 6. widely assumed       |
| 3. widely cited     | 7. temporal and spatial |
| 4. on the contrary  | 8. fluid boundaries     |

- b. Next, they decide which phrases are going to be useful for them in their business lives and write more than one sentence of their own for each.

## 5. Discussion questions

- a. Put the students in pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions. When students have gone through all the questions, bring the whole class back together so that they can share their answers and any interesting information that arose from their discussions.

## 6. Wider business theme – Venn diagrams / graphs

- a–c. Students work through the 3-part task according to the instructions. Students should do part a with a partner, and the second half of part c should be done with a partner or in small groups.

**Key:**

*fluctuates soar decline*

Ask students to share any information about useful apps they have found out by listening to their partners and to discuss the challenges they came across when creating and describing their venn diagrams.