

Chicago Ridehail Charts - Drivers

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Longevity and churn	2
2.1	New starts and quits, by month	2
2.2	Drivers quitting the platform	2
2.3	Current driver population by longevity	3
2.4	The evolution of longevity	4
2.5	Driver mean and median longevity over time	4
2.6	Trip distribution by driver longevity	6

1 Introduction

This set of charts uses the Chicago *Trips* data set to check monthly trends. To make the analysis more tractable, it uses the trips on the first Thursday of each month as representative of the whole month.

It hopes to capture both sudden changes and continuing trends in the overall ridehail landscape in Chicago. The data set does not include earnings data or driver time spent en route to pick up passengers or waiting for a trip request.

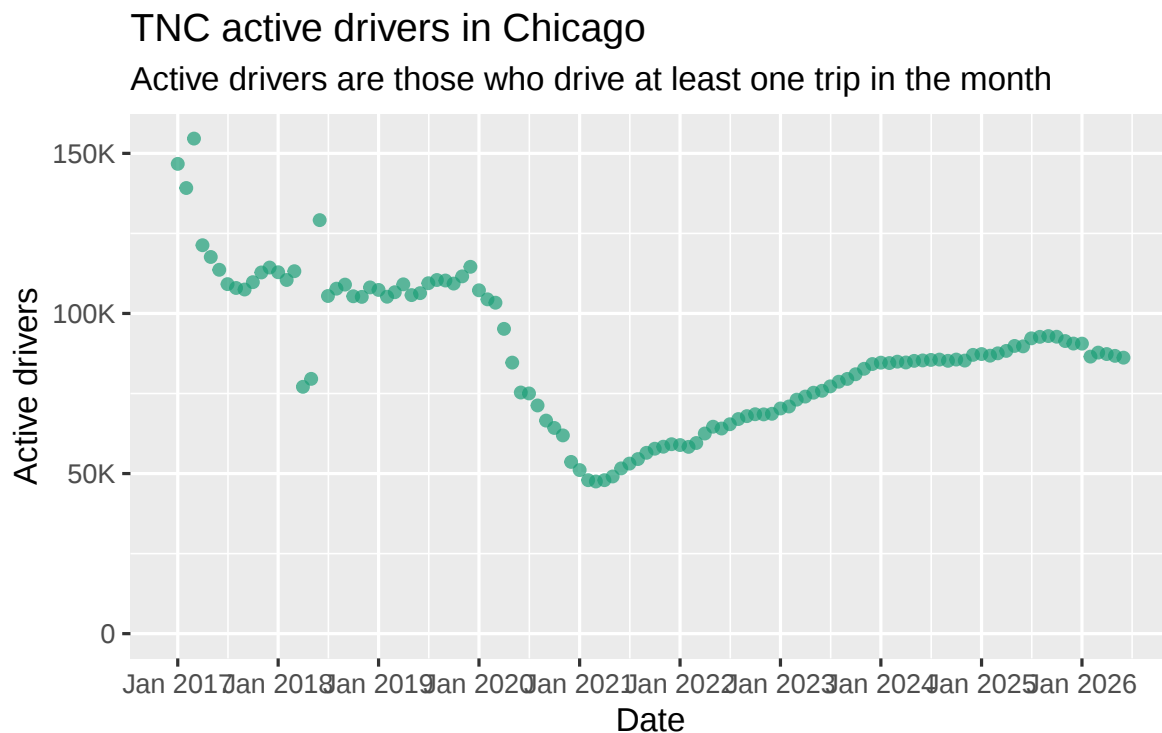


Figure 1

2 Longevity and churn

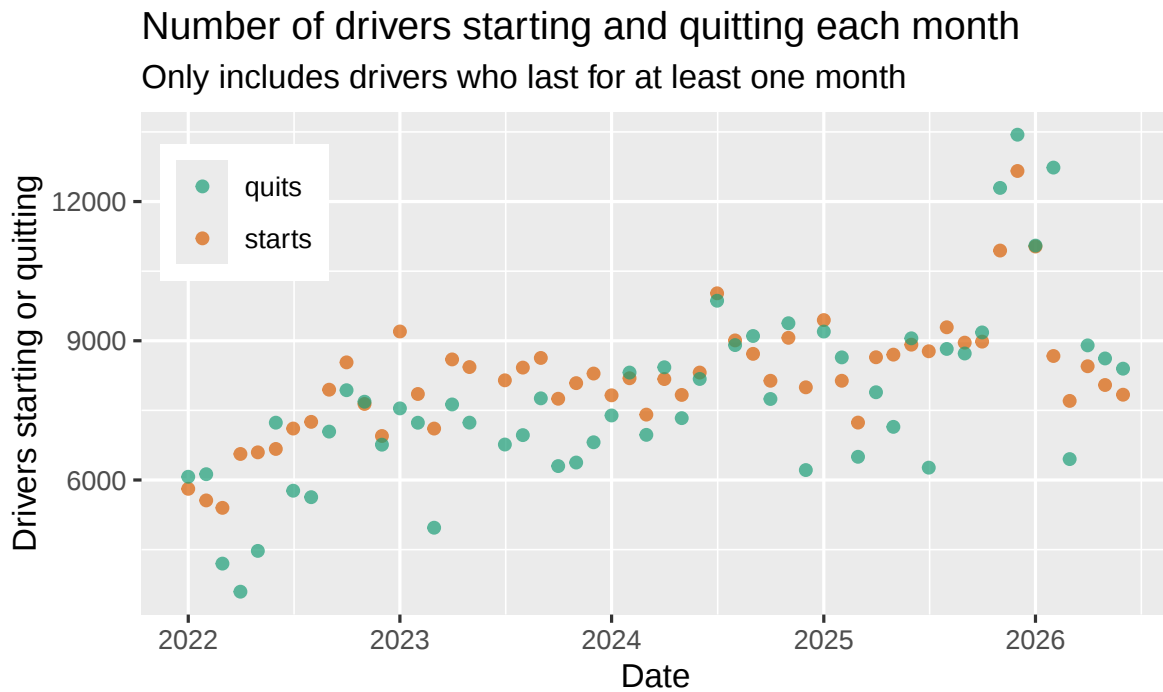
Although the driver population may look the same now as it did years ago, that doesn't mean it's the same drivers. In this section we look at how long drivers stay on the platform, and how the churn affects passenger experience.

2.1 New starts and quits, by month

The change in driver numbers is the difference between the number that start work on a TNC platform and those that quit. Figure 2 shows both of those numbers over recent years. This continual flux of drivers in and out of the market shape other charts, below.

2.2 Drivers quitting the platform

Figure 3 shows how long drivers last on the platform. It shows what percentage of drivers are still working after a number of months, adding up numbers for all starting



Excludes June 2023: starts/quits more than 10 MAD from the median, a likely reporting artifact.

Figure 2

months since 2016.

The increase in number of drivers in the first month is reflects onboarding time: the chart displays all activer drivers and compares the number to the “driver_start_month” in the data set. Each driver has a “driver_start_month”, but some do not start driving on the platform until the following month and hence only appear in the data set with a lag of one.

?@fig-driver-churn-facet shows how many drivers quit over their first year. The proportion is calculated by taking the number of drivers who start in a given month and who have trips in the month one year after that, and dividing by the number of drivers who start in a given month and who are present one month after that.

In recent years, fewer than 20% of drivers stay longer than a year.

2.3 Current driver population by longevity

Figure 4 shows the driver population for the most recent month in the data set, and shows the distribution of drivers, by longevity, on the platform in that month.

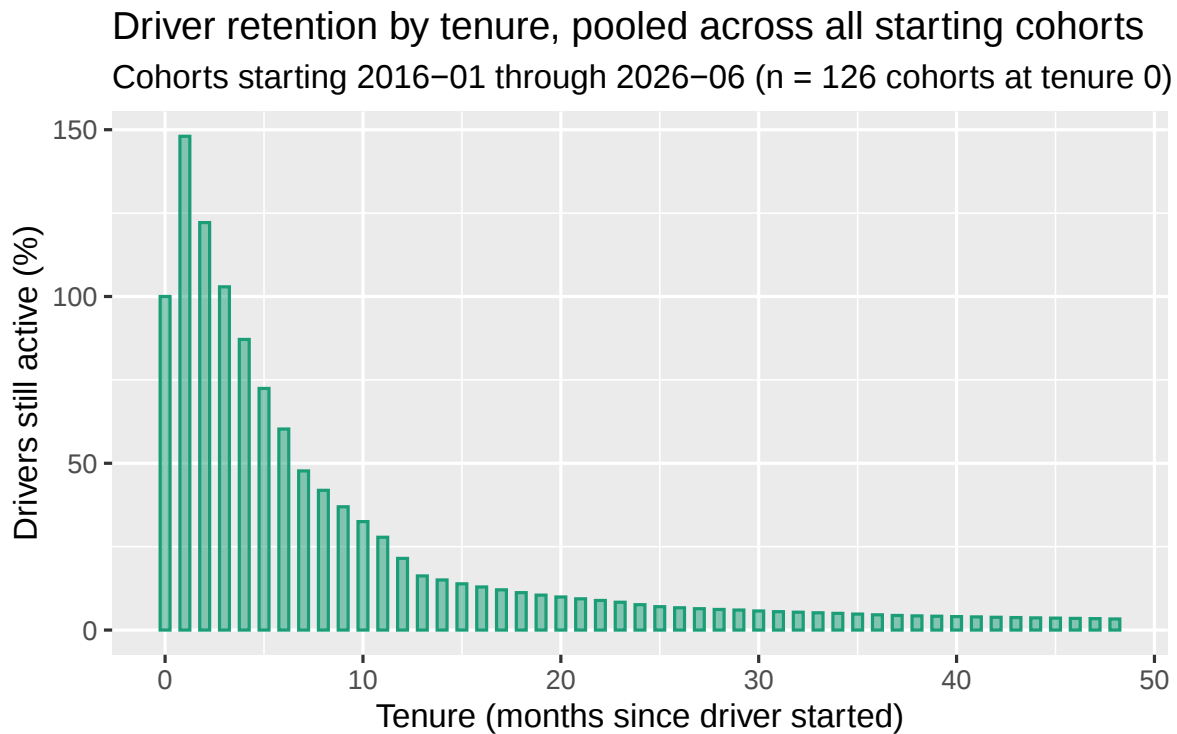


Figure 3

- The biggest single group of drivers are those new to the platform.
- The typical driver has been on the platform for less than a year.
- The average driver longevity is just over two years.

2.4 The evolution of longevity

It can be easier to interpret this if we lump drivers into new or long-term workers, based on whether they have been on the platform for more or less than a year.

2.5 Driver mean and median longevity over time

Both mean and median longevity (below) confirm the observation that the driver population has been on the platform for longer, over time, albeit with a major Covid interruption.

The Chicago data does not allow us to see whether drivers have gaps in their work: we just have a first month they are recognized and the reporting month.

Longevity of active drivers reported in June 2026

Mean start time=May 2024; mean longevity=25 months; median longevity

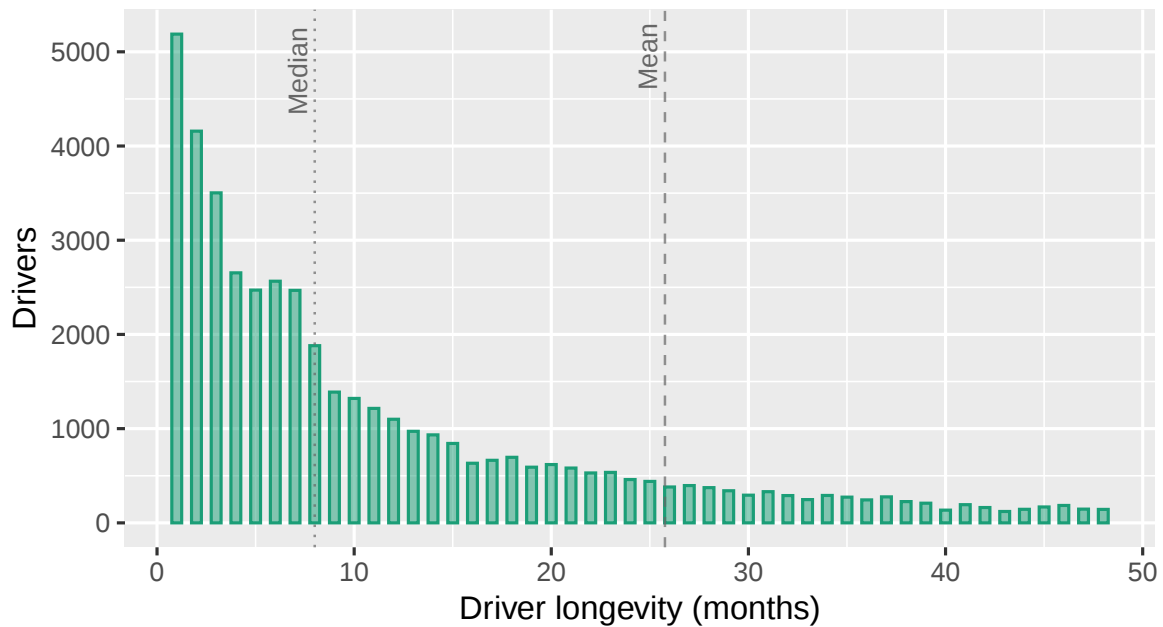
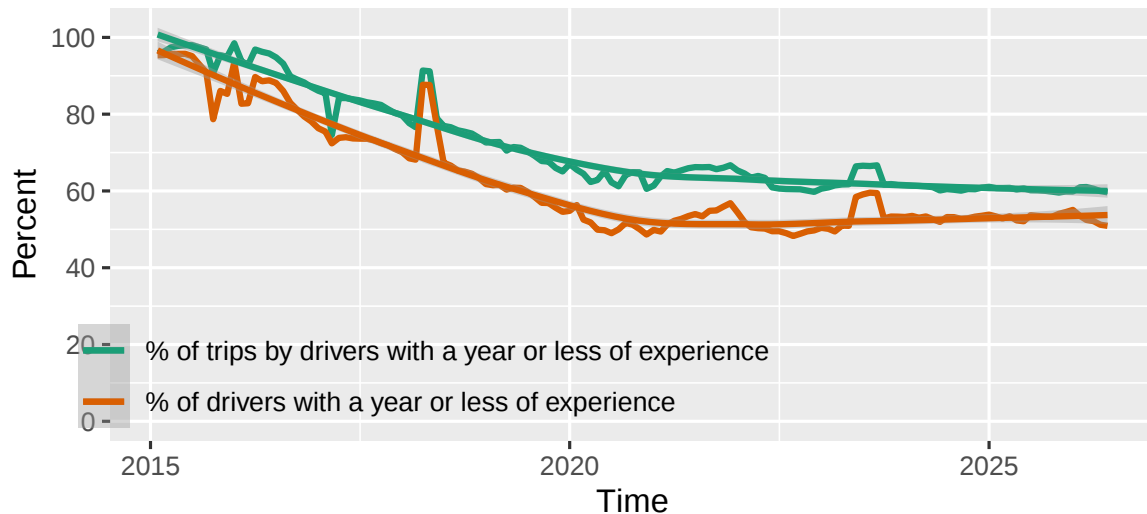


Figure 4

New drivers in Chicago

Drivers with a year or less on the platform still make up over half of all driv and provide over half of all trips.

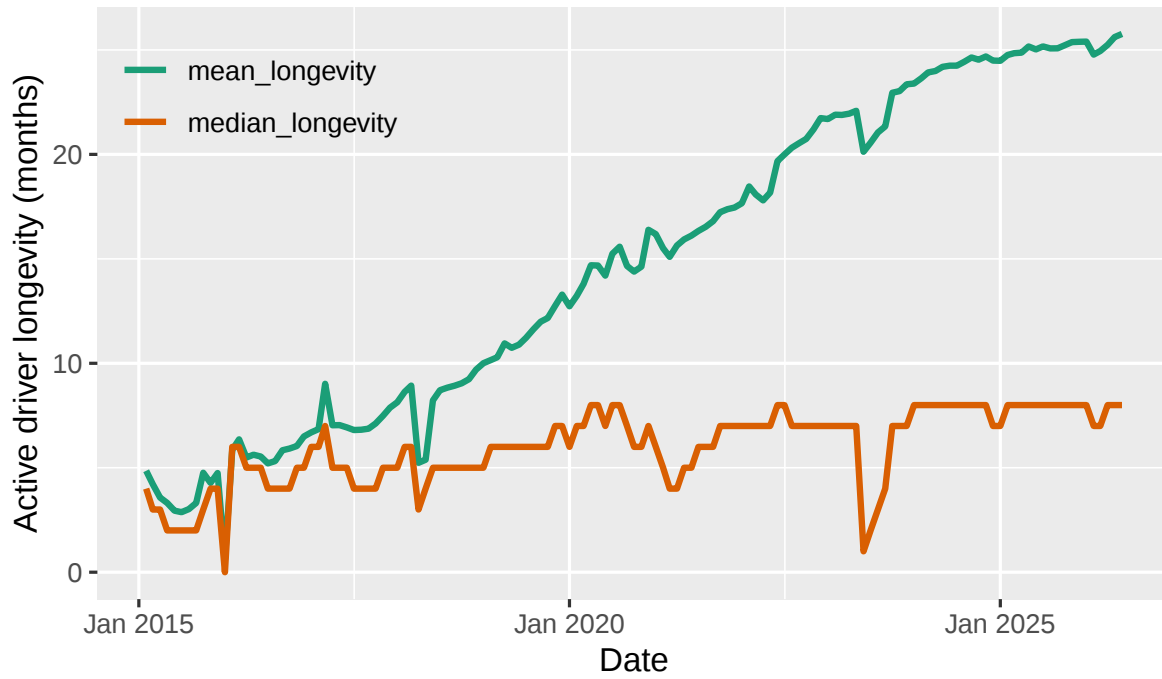


Ride hailing was still new and fast-growing in 2016, so there were few long-term drivers. Since then, the churn of incoming and leaving drivers has evened out.

Figure 5

The typical driver has now been on the platform for almost a year. Drivers who drive more trips have, on average, been on the platform just a little longer.

Chicago active driver longevity

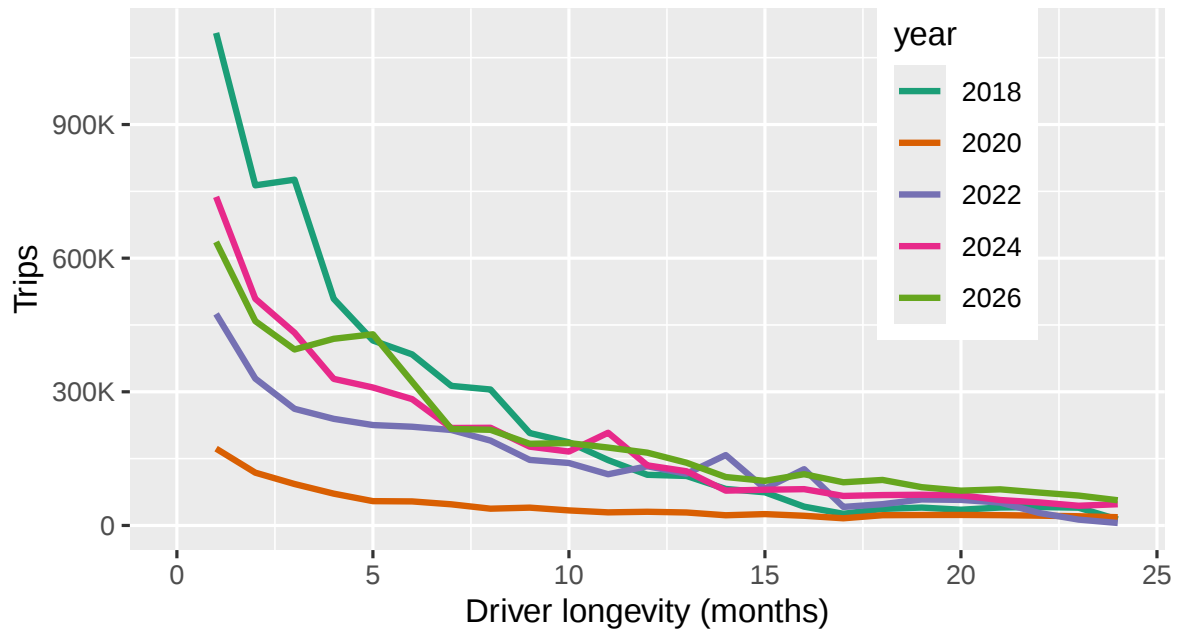


2.6 Trip distribution by driver longevity

In a given month, how many trips are given by drivers with a residency of X months?

Warning: Removed 395 rows containing missing values or values outside the scale range (`geom_line()`).

The evolution of driver longevity



Now do this over all months, not just an individual month, summing over the longevity of the driver.

Number of trips, by driver longevity, for all trips since 2016

Mean longevity = 23 months

