

## R.A.C.I. AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE UBER CASE STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the application of the R.A.C.I. matrix (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) to improve organizational performance in the context of Uber's expansion – a ridesharing company – into Romania in 2015. The article offers insights on how this tool can enhance organizational performance in multinational expansions. The R.A.C.I. model, widely used in project management, was used to clarify roles and responsibilities across Uber's global and local teams, particularly in areas such as legal compliance, operations, and stakeholder engagement. The paper uses a case study approach, drawing on qualitative data from Uber's expansion, demonstrating how the R.A.C.I. framework improved decision-making, accountability, and coordination. Key findings include Uber's ability to navigate Romania's complex regulatory environment by assigning clear responsibilities to its legal team, operations, and management, thus minimizing delays, improving coordination, facilitating rapid resolution of challenges and enhancing communication. The article argues that R.A.C.I. significantly streamlined Uber's internal processes during the expansion, contributing to a successful market entry in Bucharest. The findings contribute to understanding how R.A.C.I. can be strategically applied in complex multinational environments to improve organizational performance and accountability through efficiency and effectiveness. However, it also notes potential limitations of the model, such as decision-making rigidity, suggesting future research to explore its flexibility in dynamic environments.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Efficiency, Management team, Organizational performance, Project management, R.A.C.I.*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic and globalized economy, multinational companies face the challenge of managing complex internal processes during international expansions. Uber's decision to expand into Romania is a prime example, with numerous challenges such as "navigating regulatory frameworks, adapting business models to local market conditions, and coordinating between global and local teams".

The problem lies in ensuring smooth collaboration among stakeholders while maintaining accountability and efficient decision-making. One tool that aids in this management is the R.A.C.I. matrix, which stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed. This article explores how Uber applied the R.A.C.I. model in its expansion into Romania and assesses the impact on organizational performance.

Previous research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the R.A.C.I. model in project management and process clarity, particularly in complex and cross-functional environments. However, there is

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limited research on its application in multinational expansions. This article aims to fill that gap by providing empirical evidence from Uber's experience in Romania.

The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on R.A.C.I. by showing how it can streamline internal processes and enhance accountability in multinational expansions. By analyzing Uber's use of the R.A.C.I. model in opening its Bucharest branch, the article highlights the model's potential to facilitate smoother market entries.

The study uses a case study approach, drawing on qualitative data from Uber's expansion into Romania. The R.A.C.I. model was employed to assign clear roles across Uber's global and local teams, ensuring alignment and accountability in key areas such as legal compliance, operations, and stakeholder engagement.

The application of the R.A.C.I. model in Uber's Romanian expansion led to improved decision-making, reduced delays, and enhanced stakeholder engagement. By clearly defining roles and responsibilities, the R.A.C.I. framework minimized operational inefficiencies and enabled Uber to effectively navigate Romania's regulatory challenges.

The study demonstrates an innovative application of the R.A.C.I. model in the context of multinational corporate expansions. It shows how the model can be used to address the unique complexities of global-local coordination, improving organizational performance.

Although R.A.C.I. helped streamline processes, its reliance on clearly defined roles may have led to rigidity in decision-making, with some teams potentially constrained by predefined roles. Future research could explore the model's flexibility in more dynamic environments and also checking the effectiveness of the model.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE R.A.C.I. FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 R.A.C.I. Model Overview**

The R.A.C.I. matrix is a project management tool designed to assign clear roles and responsibilities to each stakeholder involved in a project. The acronym stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed, representing distinct levels of involvement in decision-making and task execution. By ensuring each stakeholder's role is clearly defined, the role model helps reduce ambiguity and confusion within teams, thereby improving collaboration and accountability (Sluss et al., 2010).

#### **- Responsible**

This role refers to the individuals or teams tasked with completing a specific activity or deliverable. They are the ones who "do the work." There can be multiple people assigned as "Responsible" for a task, depending on the scope of work. However, it is important that this role is clearly defined to make it clear who is actually doing the work. For example, in Uber's case, when expanding into Romania, the operations team might have been responsible for adapting the business model to local conditions.

#### **- Accountable**

The Accountable role refers to the person who has the final authority and responsibility for the completion of the task. This person ensures that the task is completed correctly and efficiently. There can only be one person who is Accountable for each task to avoid confusion about who holds ultimate responsibility for the outcome. The Accountable person signs off on the work done by those who are Responsible. In the Uber case study, the general manager for Eastern Europe might have been accountable for ensuring the success of the Romanian launch.

- Consulted

These individuals or groups provide advice, expertise, and input on specific tasks or decisions, but they are not directly responsible for execution. They offer their opinions before the task is finalized. Consulted stakeholders are actively involved in the decision-making process, often experts or teams whose input is critical for informed decisions. In Uber’s expansion into Romania, the legal team and regulatory advisors might have been consulted to ensure that local laws and regulations were adhered to.

- Informed

Informed stakeholders are those who need to be kept up to date on the progress and completion of the task. They do not provide input or make decisions, but they are regularly informed about developments and outcomes. The purpose of informing these stakeholders is to maintain transparency and alignment within the organization. In Uber’s case, the global leadership team or external stakeholders such as investors might have been informed about the status of the Romanian expansion.

**2.2 Historical Development of the RACI Matrix**

The RACI framework has its origins in the 1950s as businesses and project managers sought ways to improve role clarity and responsibility allocation within increasingly complex organizational structures (Parker, 2008). Initially developed within the engineering and construction industries, the RACI matrix quickly gained popularity due to its simplicity and adaptability to different organizational needs. Its foundation is rooted in defining roles with a clear, consistent structure, helping organizations minimize ambiguity around responsibilities, especially in team-based projects (Leavitt, 2013).

The RACI matrix's structured approach made it an appealing tool for large projects involving multiple departments. By the late 20th century, its adoption had expanded into industries such as healthcare, finance, and information technology (IT), where managing cross-functional teams and projects required robust tools to streamline role delegation. The growth in collaborative environments across organizations and the push for agile management practices have further emphasized RACI's role in modern project management.

**2.3 Advantages of the R.A.C.I. Model**

The R.A.C.I. matrix is valuable in environments where complex tasks are carried out by multiple stakeholders, making it particularly useful for large organizations like Uber. The key advantages of implementing the R.A.C.I. model include Role Clarity, Enhanced Accountability, Improved Communication, Better Decision Making (Morgeson et al., 2009).

**Table 1. Common Benefits of the R.A.C.I. Model**

	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	<b>Role Clarity</b>	Provides clear definition of tasks and responsibilities, minimizing overlap. For example, during Uber's expansion into Romania, the legal team's responsibilities were clearly defined, ensuring no overlap with operations.
2	<b>Enhanced Accountability</b>	Ensures that each task has one person accountable for its success or failure. In the Heathrow Terminal 5 project, having a dedicated project manager accountable for timelines ensured the project stayed on track.
3	<b>Improved Communication</b>	Distinguishes between those to consult and those to inform, reducing unnecessary communication. For instance, in the manufacturing firm case study, product managers were informed of market analysis outcomes without being overwhelmed by day-to-day details.

	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Description</b>
4	<b>Streamlined Decision-Making</b>	Consulted roles provide the necessary input for decisions, which are made efficiently by the accountable party. In Uber's Romanian launch, consulting local market experts allowed the accountable manager to make informed, timely decisions.
5	<b>Effective Resource Allocation</b>	The R.A.C.I. model ensures that resources are allocated efficiently, with clear task ownership, preventing duplication of efforts or misunderstandings about responsibilities.

*Source:* Author's own research

### 2.3.1 Clarity of Roles

By clearly specifying who is Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed, the R.A.C.I model helps prevent overlapping roles and responsibilities, which can lead to inefficiencies or miscommunication. Role clarity is widely recognized as a critical factor in effective team performance and organizational efficiency. Studies consistently show that clearly defined roles lead to better decision-making, enhanced employee satisfaction, and reduced inter-team conflicts (Cordery et al., 2010). For instance, Cordery and colleagues found that teams with higher role clarity reported improved job satisfaction and lower levels of stress, as team members were more confident in their specific responsibilities and contributions (Cordery et al., 2010).

Another key study by Caruso and Woolley (2008) examined the positive effects of role clarity on team dynamics, finding that distinct, well-communicated roles allowed team members to focus on their strengths and trust others to fulfill their duties (Caruso & Woolley, 2008). This reduces the overlap in tasks and minimizes redundancies, which can otherwise lead to delays and resource wastage.

### 2.3.2 Enhanced Accountability

Having one person who is Accountable for a task ensures clear ownership of outcomes, making it easier to track performance and completion. This accountability minimises confusion and ensures ownership of outcomes, ultimately leading to greater project success. According to a study by Mac Donald et al. (2019), projects utilising the R.A.C.I. model saw a 25% improvement in task completion rates (Mac Donald et al., 2019).

### 2.3.3 Efficient Communication

RACI distinguishes between those to consult and those to inform, reducing unnecessary communication. Improved communication ensures that relevant parties are kept informed without overwhelming them with excessive information.

### 2.3.4 Better Decision-Making

By consulting the right experts at the right time, organizations can make more informed decisions, reducing the likelihood of errors and oversights.

### 2.3.5 Better Resource Allocation

Effective resource allocation is one of the key benefits of implementing the R.A.C.I. model in project management. By clearly defining roles such as Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed, organizations can allocate resources more efficiently. Better resource allocation means ensuring that the right people are involved in the right tasks, preventing resource wastage and duplication of efforts (Ancona, 2017).

The R.A.C.I. framework optimizes resource use by making it explicitly clear who is responsible for each activity, which helps prevent overlapping efforts and inefficient use of talent.

In complex, cross-functional projects, resource allocation often becomes challenging due to role ambiguity. The R.A.C.I. model reduces these ambiguities by creating transparency regarding responsibilities (Abbott, 2024).

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: CASE STUDY AS A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Case Study as Research Methodology**

The case study approach is a well-regarded qualitative research methodology that allows for an in-depth exploration of complex phenomena within their real-life contexts. For the topic of R.A.C.I. and organisational performance, the case study method is particularly effective in examining how this framework is applied in diverse scenarios and organisational environments. By focusing on multiple real-world examples, the case study approach provides a comprehensive understanding of how the R.A.C.I. model contributes to enhanced accountability, role clarity, and efficiency in project management (Yin, 2018).

The central advantage of using case studies lies in their ability to capture nuanced interactions among stakeholders and reveal the impacts of the R.A.C.I. model that may not be observable through quantitative methods alone. Case studies allow researchers to understand how organizational practices evolve, how decisions are made, and how various teams collaborate. This approach is ideal for exploring questions like, "How does the implementation of R.A.C.I. enhance organizational performance in different sectors?" and "What challenges arise during its implementation?" (Eisenhardt, 1989).

#### **3.2 Rationale for Case Study Selection**

For this article, the case study methodology was chosen for its ability to provide detailed and context-specific insights into the application of the R.A.C.I. model. The focus on Uber's expansion into Romania was driven by several key factors:

- **Complexity and Diversity:** These cases represent different industries—technology, infrastructure, and manufacturing—that face unique challenges during project execution. This diversity helps to generalize findings related to the R.A.C.I. model's impact on organizational performance (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).
- **Implementation of R.A.C.I.:** All three organizations have explicitly implemented the R.A.C.I. framework, providing an opportunity to study its application in different managerial contexts. This ensures that the research is directly relevant to the theme of the paper, which focuses on role clarity and organizational effectiveness

#### **3.3 Data Collection and Analysis**

The data the case study was gathered through a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, members of the management team which were involved in the implementation of the R.A.C.I. model. These stakeholders included project managers, managers and operational staff. The interviews were aimed at understanding the practical aspects of role assignment, accountability measures, and communication flows.

Secondary data were obtained from company reports, industry publications, and previously published case studies, a combination of internal documents and interviews with local stakeholders helped to understand the regulatory challenges and adaptation of the R.A.C.I. model (Yin, 2018).

The data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach to identify recurring patterns and themes related to role clarity, decision-making efficiency, and stakeholder communication. This qualitative approach helped to highlight not only the successes but also the limitations and challenges associated with the R.A.C.I. implementation in each case (Braun, 2006).

### 3.4 Strengths and Limitations of the Case Study Approach

The use of case studies as a research methodology offers several strengths. It provides rich, contextual insights that are particularly valuable when exploring a multifaceted concept like the R.A.C.I. model. The in-depth analysis allows researchers to capture subtle differences in how organizations define and manage roles, which is crucial for understanding the model's effectiveness in enhancing organizational performance (Stake, 1995).

However, the case study approach also has its limitations. The findings are context-specific and may not be fully generalizable to all organizational settings. Each case is influenced by its unique industry dynamics, culture, and internal processes, which can limit the applicability of the results beyond the studied contexts. Additionally, there is a risk of bias due to the subjective nature of qualitative data collection, particularly in the interpretation of interviews (Yin, 2018). Despite these limitations, the case study method remains a robust tool for exploring complex processes like the implementation of the R.A.C.I. framework.

## 4. CASE STUDY: UBER'S USE OF R.A.C.I. IN THE ROMANIA EXPANSION

In Uber's expansion into Romania, the R.A.C.I. model played a crucial role in organizing cross-functional teams, ensuring that the right people were involved at the right stages, ultimately contributing to the smooth and efficient establishment of the new branch. By applying the R.A.C.I. model, Uber was able to manage the complexity of their international expansion, streamline decision-making processes, and enhance overall organizational performance.

When Uber decided to open a branch in Bucharest, Romania in 2015, the company faced several challenges typical of international expansions, including navigating local regulations, adapting operations to the market, and managing relationships with key stakeholders. To overcome these challenges, Uber implemented the R.A.C.I. matrix, which clarified the responsibilities and roles across its global and local teams. This structured approach ensured smooth coordination among the involved departments and helped Uber successfully launch its operations in Bucharest.

**Table 2. R.A.C.I. Roles Assigned for Key Functions in Uber's Romanian Expansion**

Function/Task	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
<b>Legal Compliance</b>	Legal Team	Chief Legal Officer	Regulatory Advisors	Global Leadership, Marketing
<b>Business Model Adaptation</b>	Operations Team	General Manager (Eastern Europe)	Local Business Experts	Global Operations Team
<b>Pricing Strategy</b>	Operations Team	General Manager (Eastern Europe)	Local Market Analysts	Marketing, Global Finance Team
<b>Driver Recruitment &amp; Onboarding</b>	Operations Team	General Manager (Eastern Europe)	Local Hiring Partners	Human Resources, Marketing
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	Public Affairs Team	Head of Public Affairs (Europe)	Government Officials	Marketing, Legal Team
<b>Marketing &amp; Communications</b>	Marketing Team	Chief Marketing Officer	Operations, Public Affairs	Legal Team, Global Leadership

Source: Author's own research

#### 4.1 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

One of the biggest challenges of Uber's expansion into Romania was complying with local laws, especially regarding transportation regulations. The legal team played a crucial role here:

- **Responsible:** Uber's legal team took on the Responsible role for ensuring that the company complied with Romanian regulations. This included understanding and navigating Romania's unique transportation and labor laws, as well as addressing challenges posed by ride-sharing regulations. For example, Uber had to ensure that its business model did not conflict with local taxi regulations, which had caused issues in other countries. The legal team drafted contracts, reviewed licenses, and managed relations with regulatory bodies.
- **Accountable:** Uber's Chief Legal Officer was Accountable for ensuring full legal compliance. If any issues arose, such as conflicts with taxi unions or the need to obtain special permits for drivers, the Chief Legal Officer was the one responsible for the consequences. For example, when lobbying for ride-sharing regulations favorable to Uber, the Chief Legal Officer made the final decision on the legal strategy and ensured the legal team executed it correctly.

#### 4.2 Operations and Launch Strategy

Another key area during the Bucharest launch was adapting Uber's operational strategy to the local context:

- **Responsible:** The operations team was Responsible for designing and implementing Uber's business model in Romania. This involved several local adjustments, such as determining pricing strategies, recruiting drivers, and ensuring the availability of customer support services. For example, the operations team analyzed the local market to determine a pricing strategy that would compete with traditional taxis while also offering better value to customers. They also handled the logistical aspects of integrating Romanian drivers into Uber's system, from onboarding to compliance checks.
- **Accountable:** The general manager for Eastern Europe held the Accountable role for the overall success of the branch launch. This individual had final authority over key operational decisions, such as finalizing the business model for Bucharest or approving marketing and operational timelines. The general manager was also responsible for signing off on the number of drivers recruited before the service officially launched in Bucharest.

#### 4.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Managing relationships with stakeholders was crucial to ensure smooth integration with local communities and authorities:

- **Consulted:** Uber's public affairs team took on the Consulted role, working closely with local authorities and community leaders. Before the launch, the public affairs team liaised with Romanian government officials to explain Uber's business model and highlight the potential economic benefits of its operations, such as job creation for drivers. For example, they consulted local transport agencies to ensure that Uber's presence would complement, rather than conflict with, existing transportation systems. Additionally, the public affairs team sought feedback from local businesses and potential partners to ensure Uber's offering was aligned with community needs.

- **Informed:** Throughout the expansion process, Uber's marketing and communications teams were Informed of developments to align their campaigns with legal, operational, and stakeholder activities. For example, the marketing team needed periodic updates from the public affairs team on public sentiment and from the legal team on compliance issues. These updates allowed marketing to craft messages that emphasized Uber's commitment to regulatory compliance, safety, and reliability. By staying regularly informed, the marketing team could adjust its campaigns to address any emerging concerns, such as public skepticism about the safety of ride-sharing services.

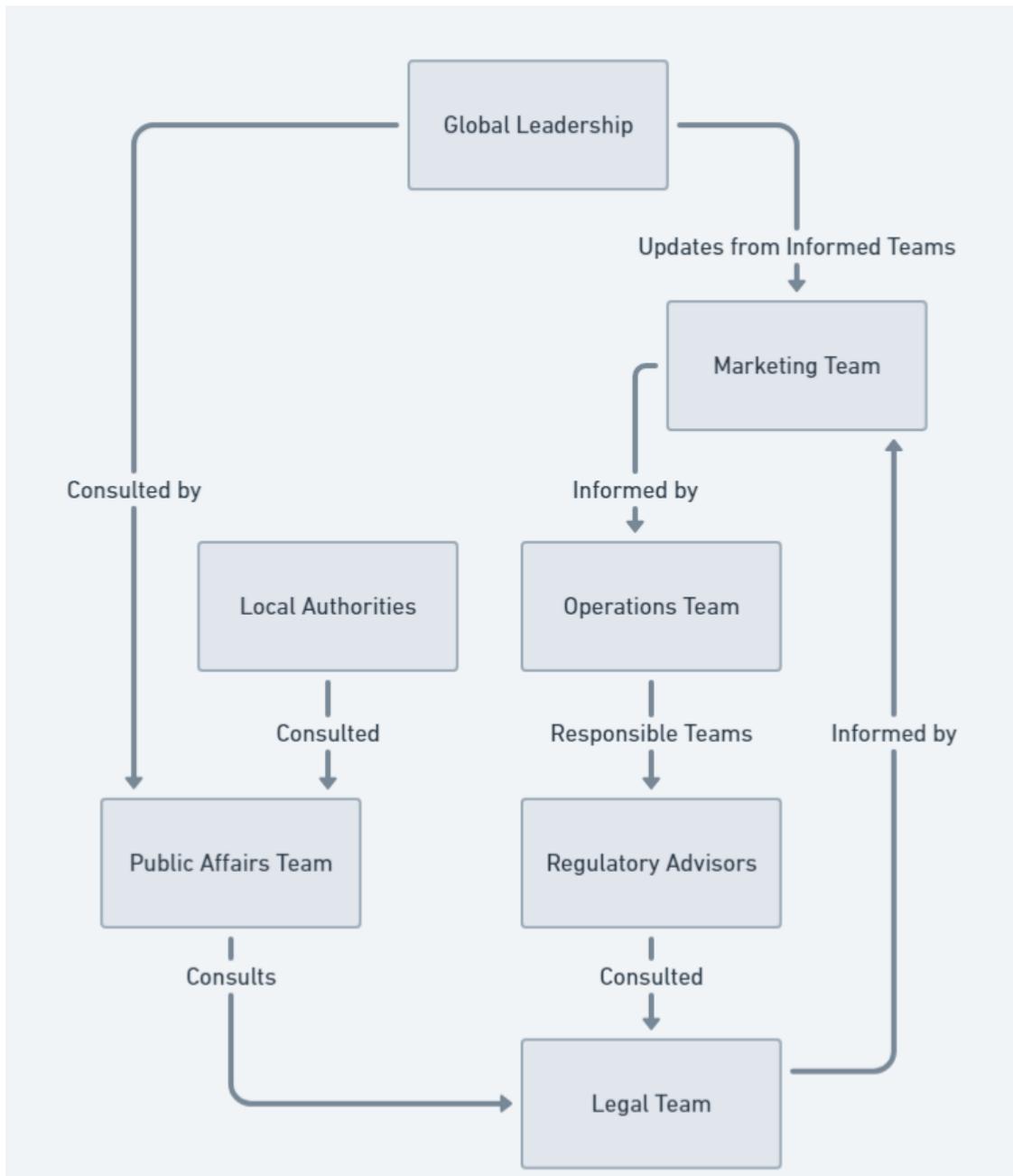
#### **4.4 Impact of the R.A.C.I. Model on Uber's Expansion in Romania**

By implementing the R.A.C.I. model, Uber clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of its global and local teams, avoiding confusion and communication breakdowns during the launch. Each department knew exactly what was expected of them and whom to consult or inform at each stage of the project.

For example, When the legal team identified a potential roadblock with local taxi unions, the public affairs team was consulted to engage with relevant stakeholders and resolve the issue, while the marketing team was informed to adjust the public messaging accordingly.

Another example is when the operations team adapted Uber's global model to meet Romania's local needs, while the general manager for Eastern Europe ensured that the overall strategy remained aligned with Uber's broader objectives.

This structured approach not only minimized delays but also allowed Uber to quickly resolve emerging issues, ensuring that all departments worked efficiently toward the common goal of launching a successful new branch in Bucharest. The R.A.C.I. matrix enabled Uber to maintain high levels of coordination, accountability, and transparency throughout the process, contributing to the effective and timely launch of its services in Romania.



**Figure 1. UBER – Team Communication Flowchart**  
*Source: Author's own research*

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Uber's expansion into Romania demonstrates how the R.A.C.I. matrix can significantly enhance organizational performance by clearly defining roles and responsibilities. The use of the R.A.C.I. model ensured that Uber's internal teams worked cohesively, reducing delays and improving decision-making efficiency. This case study highlights the R.A.C.I. framework as an essential tool for multinational corporations undergoing complex international expansions. It provides a practical model for other organizations seeking to improve their organizational performance through more efficient internal processes and clearly defined accountability.

The implementation of the R.A.C.I. framework (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) played a crucial role in Uber's successful launch in Bucharest, Romania. The R.A.C.I. model was used to assign specific responsibilities across various teams, ensuring efficient collaboration and effective decision-making during the complex expansion process. For example, Uber's legal team was responsible for managing local regulations, while the Chief Legal Officer was accountable for ensuring compliance with national laws. This approach facilitated the resolution of regulatory challenges, such as navigating Romanian transportation laws and addressing opposition from local taxi unions. The operations team adapted Uber's global business model to local market conditions, ensuring smooth integration into Romania's unique transportation landscape, with the general manager for Eastern Europe accountable for the overall success.

The use of the R.A.C.I. matrix had a direct impact on organizational performance by improving communication and accountability between global and local teams. Each department had a clear understanding of its role, minimizing delays and increasing stakeholder engagement. The public affairs team consulted with local authorities to align Uber's operations with community needs, while the marketing team was kept informed to ensure that their campaigns reflected legal and operational progress.

In conclusion, Uber's use of the R.A.C.I. model during the Bucharest expansion underscores the necessity of structured role definitions in complex multinational projects. It highlights how clarity in responsibilities and accountability improves performance by streamlining processes, reducing risks, and fostering cross-functional collaboration in challenging regulatory environments.

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