

## **A bicycle built for business**

May 16, 2012 2:00 AM Mark Miester  
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Rob Lynch, who will receive an MBA at Tulane Commencement on Saturday (May 19), didn't just start a new business in New Orleans. He helped start a new industry. Lynch is the founder of Bike Taxi Unlimited, which last year became one of three companies awarded the right to begin operating pedicabs in New Orleans.



MBA grad Rob Lynch, founder of Bike Taxi Unlimited, has helped launch the pedicab business in New Orleans. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

"We get people from A to B with kind of an interesting look at the city," Lynch says of his pedal-powered rickshaws. "It's all about showing people a different side of New Orleans."

A graduate of Loyola University in New Orleans, Lynch worked as a financial analyst in St. Louis for four years, but eventually he grew tired of the corporate grind. When his brother told him about the thriving pedicab business in Charleston, S.C., Lynch, an avid cyclist, realized the tourist-friendly mode of transport would be a perfect

match for New Orleans.

He spent two years living in a friend's basement and subsisting on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to save money for the venture, and then another year and a half working with city officials to draft an ordinance legalizing pedicabs.

Lynch's hard work paid off. Bike Taxi Unlimited carried its first passenger in September 2011, and since then the company's distinctive yellow pedicabs have become a familiar sight around town and at events like the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and the French Quarter Festival.

The business has been so successful, in fact, that Lynch plans to expand into two additional cities as well as start a new business designing and selling pedicabs to operators across the country. Regardless of how much the company grows, however, Lynch says he's committed to New Orleans.

“New Orleans is going to be the home base of where I do everything,” Lynch says. “I love the city. I've loved it ever since I came to college here, and I want to stay here.”

*Mark Miester is the editor of Freeman magazine for the A. B. Freeman School of Business.*