The Uber car-hailing service has become one gigantic controversy, not just in Hong Kong, but in many other world cities as well. There are as many sides to the story as stakeholders – the general public, regulators, taxi drivers, taxi company operators, taxi license holders and, of course, Uber and its drivers. Naturally, conflicting arguments have been raised. Which of these is right depends really on the interest of the speaker.

But as The Standard’s editorial pointed out, the core question is whether the local regulatory regime is able to “keep up with the trend.” And that is “a trend that can’t be stopped.” We can call this situation “大勢所趨” (da4 shi4 suo3 qu1).

“大” (da4) is “big,” “勢” (shi4) is “a trend,” “所” (suo3) means “that which,” and “趨” (qu1) is “to tend toward,” “heading.” “大勢” (da4 shi4)

means “the general trend of events,” “the general drift of affairs.” Literally, “大勢所趨” (da4 shi4 suo3 qu1) is “where the big trend is heading.”

It means “the general trend of things,” or “an irresistible general trend.” The internet is also a case of “大勢所趨” (da4 shi4 suo3 qu1), so is digital photography.

A “trend” is a great force. When a trend is formed, you don’t want to stand in its way. In any event, it would be futile to resist. If you refuse to use the e-mail, or your shop is still selling rolls of film to tourists, you may be heading for extinction.

**Terms containing the character “勢” (shi4) include:**

- 權勢 (quan2 shi4) – political power and influence
- 勢力 (shi4 li4) – force, power
- 形勢 (xing2 shi4) – situation, the way things look
- 趁勢 (chen4 shi4) – taking advantage of