

Do Online Dating Sites Work?

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Abstract

This article was originally written in March 2009. Despite the availability of new sites (and ones specialized for particular demographics), the basic issue is still there. Do these websites do the job they were designed to do?

Background

When it comes to dating (the social type, not the geological type), nothing compares to a face-to-face meeting. But how do you go about that when you have a busy schedule? Whether I am working on horneker.com, online consulting, or out of the house, dating is the last thing I am concerned about¹.

I decided to rework this article after playing some dating simulation games available online (mostly based on the RenPy project²).

Eventually, I have to start somewhere. I find that traditional methods (such as the bar scene³) simply do not work for me. In this Internet age, online dating services are the preferred method, and do work for some people.

Historical Experiment

Note: Yahoo! no longer offers this service, but was available at the time this was originally written.

I shall try an experiment, and go to Yahoo!, setup a profile, and have any search results delivered to my inbox three times a week. For this experiment, I literally "opened up" and had been truly honest about myself in my profile there.⁴

Of course, my profile has to be "approved" before it shows up in the database. (As of this writing, it has been approved.)

¹Come to think of it, another concern are the harassment laws in the books that are so vague, it makes dating very difficult if not impossible without the risk of a lawsuit. But then Donald Trump's remarks about women go *way beyond harassment*, to say the least.

²<http://www.renpy.org>

³Not that I ever went to a bar in the first place.

⁴If you are going to get a date, it is best to show your true self, and not to fudge anything just to get the result you want. That tactic, I guarantee, will not work.

I have specified matches within 25 miles of home, an age range of 38 to 50,⁵ and preferences are open to maximize results.

- 2009/03/26 on Yahoo!. I have uploaded a photo of myself. After the photograph was approved, the profile was set. After logging in, I clicked on the We Match button, and found 158 matches with an initial result of 1,000 entries in the overall search results. Not bad for the first day. However, clicking on Who Viewed Me yielded nothing, but then that is to be expected.
- 2009/03/28 A Google search on dating sites brought me to this free site (datehookup.com). I decided to try this. All I need to do is enter e-mail and a password to join. Unlike Yahoo, the information requested when signing up is simpler, and much quicker, so I can get into the database sooner.

So far: Yahoo! yielded one view of my profile, and the person who viewed the profile was not on my search results.

New Trends

The two main sites for online dating are eHarmony (<http://www.eharmony.com>) and Match (<http://www.match.com>). I have yet to try either of those. I am approaching the age where another site becomes available for me to try, namely OurTime.com.

These days, I do not worry too much about this sort of thing. For me, it will either happen or it will not.

⁵I have plenty of friends that are older than 50! These days, I would choose a range between 40 and 60.