

Americans Discover Online Dating

(NAPSA)—At the age of 37 and divorced with one child, Suzy Bauter had practically given up on the dating scene, until she met Rodney Prouty.

Rodney, also 37 and also divorced with three children, had been browsing udate.com for eight months when he received a “whisper,” or instant message, from Suzy.

One whisper led to many, Rodney moved to Suzy’s town, and they have been in a committed relationship for over a year.

“Being a single parent makes it difficult to go out and socialize. But udate.com allowed me to meet dozens of people at the same time and have interesting conversations with attractive men I might not meet in everyday life,” said Suzy.

The rise in popularity and acceptance of online dating is hardly surprising. The pace of life has changed and single people increasingly find themselves working long hours in demanding careers. The same pressures are taking their toll on marriages, with divorce causing many adults to re-enter the singles scene. Many people now look to a third-party intermediary for help in the dating process.

“The online dating experience provides singles with the perfect surroundings in which to be themselves—the anonymity of the Web allows a level of emotional honesty that can pave the way to a trusted and committed ‘offline’ relationship,” said Mel Morris, CEO of uDate.

In a survey conducted of 14,833 udate.com users, 77 percent are looking for a genuine relationship or marriage, and 68 percent believe Internet dating is a better way to meet people than conventional methods.

Online dating has also witnessed the effects of recent global uncertainty as people look to con-



Suzy Bauter and Rodney Prouty found a committed relationship thanks to online dating.

nect with someone to share their feelings with.

Offline dating services, such as personal matchmakers and advertisements, can be expensive and offer minimal interaction for people to get to know each other. Online dating, on the other hand, is affordable at about \$25 a month and allows members to attach photos and interact instantly with a list of more than 150 suggested matches generated by matching technology.

The Web site udate.com is one of the world’s largest global online dating Web sites. Today, udate.com has more than 11 million members, with as many as 50,000 new members every week.

“We average 300 to 400 new members every hour,” said Morris. Members come from every race, age group, religion and all corners of the globe.

There are 81.7 million single adults in the U.S., according to the Census Bureau, and Jupiter Research estimates that the 15 million Americans who use online dating this year will grow to 24 million by 2007.

“I recommend udate.com to all my friends,” said Suzy. “It’s the safest, easiest and most fun way to meet new people.”