

The Dating Game Of The New Millennium

Millions Of Singles Are Turning To The Internet And Finding Love Online

(NAPSA)—In the '80s it was the gym. In the '90s it was the coffee bar. But today, the preferred dating spot to meet singles is on the Internet. As the Internet has become increasingly more essential to people's lives, singles are turning to online communities to enhance their dating lives. In fact, many singles have completely sworn off bars and blind dates and now rely solely on the Internet to find new friends, casual dates and committed relationships.

Growing Trend Becoming Mainstream

Between November 2001 and April 2002, the entire online personals market grew 29 percent to 18.6 million monthly visitors (Jupiter Media Metrix), and about 22 percent of America's 98 million singles have tried online dating (American Demographics, February 2002).

"Nobody should leave one of the most important aspects of their lives completely up to chance," says Darlene Von Lehman, about looking for Mr. Right. In 1998, she took love into her own hands and joined the ranks of millions of singles in America who use online personals services to meet people. And when she married Dave, she became one of the multitude of success stories of couples who met on Yahoo! Personals.

Katie Mitic, general manager of Yahoo! Personals says that the phenomenon of online dating fits with today's American lifestyle. "People are busier than ever, and it's becoming more difficult for singles to fit a social life into hectic work schedules. Yahoo! Personals makes it easy for singles to find people who share similar interests without the dreaded singles bar scene."

Online Dating 411—Getting Started

The key to finding success is to make sure that your personal ad is unique, compelling and fun. Following are tips from online dating expert, Katie Mitic:



Darlene and Dave Von Lehman met on Yahoo! Personals.

♥ **Write a catchy headline.** Make it memorable, not boastful. "Saucy Princess Seeks Sensitive Pirate for Midnight Raid," tells a lot more about you than "SWF Craves Attention."

♥ **Tell the truth.** It may be tempting to embellish your qualities, but if your goal is to find a true soulmate, honesty is the best policy for building a lasting relationship.

♥ **Show, don't tell.** Instead of saying I like music, movies and restaurants," offer specific examples such as you like "Dave Matthews Band, Woody Allen flicks, and spicy Thai food."

♥ **Keep it light-hearted.** Don't weigh a personal ad down with sob stories on past break-ups. Keep the ad cheerful and optimistic to entice positive responses.

♥ **Put your best face forward!** Want more responses? The easiest way to get noticed is to post a photo on your ad—ads with photos get five times more responses.

Let The Games Begin—Ready To Meet!

The great thing about online dating is that you have complete control of the situation—you are able to do a lot of research prior to meeting via e-mail, instant messaging and phone conversations. Yahoo! Personals recommends meeting in a public place. Just like offline dating, use common sense. For more tips, check out <http://personals.yahoo.com>.

Sizzling Love Stats—What Yahoo! Personals Users Tell Us About Online Dating:

- The Internet makes it easier to juggle—62 percent said they would only date one person at a time in the offline world, while 80 percent of subscribers entertain between two and seven prospects at a time online.
- 73 percent use online personals as a way to supplement other ways of meeting people.
- By the time Yahoo! Personals subscribers meet, 50 percent have exchanged up to 10 e-mails, had at least 25 instant messaging sessions, talked on the phone five times, and communicated for at least three weeks.
- Some things never change—76 percent of men search online ads based on physical appearance—79 percent of women value personality more than physical appearance.
- 56 percent are optimistic about finding a relationship through Yahoo! Personals.
- 50 percent subscribe to Yahoo! Personals because "I can meet people at my own pace, in the comfort of my home."
- 75 percent say the people they have met in person through Yahoo! Personals represented themselves honestly online.
- Half of Yahoo! Personals subscribers have had at least one in-person meeting, with 65 percent reporting a pleasant first meeting.
- 50 percent of Yahoo! Personals users have told friends and family that they are members of an online personals service.

