



How has Internet dating changed society?

An Insider's Look

by

Mark Brooks

**Analyst / Consultant, Courtland Brooks
Chairman, Internet Dating Executive Alliance
Editor, Online Personals Watch**

January, 2011



Summary

We surveyed executives at the top dating sites in the world to get a snapshot on their opinion on how Internet dating has changed society. Executives from Match, People Media, Shaadi, Bharat Matrimony, Baihe, Friendscout24, Fling, Manhunt, Zoosk and Parship responded, among others.

Internet dating sites have become very popular and are affecting numerous aspects of society, according to executives at some of the top Internet dating companies around the world. Changes that dating companies have affected include the increase in interracial marriages, more acceptance of gays, and the increased pickiness of singles.

Singles are becoming more picky, because Internet dating is enabling them to be more selective in larger pools of people. We're definitely in a new era of the mating game. Singles can search the world, but most still prefer to meet people who live less than 23 miles away.

Users are addicted to choice and their expectations have risen. By creating extensive checklists they may be closing their minds to possibilities however. People are becoming less inclined to settle for mediocre relationships.

There's a liberation of sexuality happening online and sexual minorities, inter-sexed people, and gay people are enjoying a newly found freedom. Gays can disclose their HIV status online. This rise in disclosure has contributed to a reduction in the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and infections.

The rise of Internet dating has also resulted in less prostitution as people no longer need to search on the streets. They can find casual relationships online if that is what they desire.

It is now quicker and cheaper to find a lover than ever before. Scientific matchmaking and location based services on smart phones will drive the next round of innovation in Internet dating and changes in societal norms. The stigma surrounding Internet dating is dissipating.

Keywords: Internet dating, online personals, matchmaking

Internet Dating Origins and Overview

The first Internet dating sites originated in the mid-nineties and allowed users to create a profile and search for matches. Internet dating sites went on to introduce more options for communication such as instant messaging and webcam based video dating. Some sites introduced more comprehensive character profiling questionnaires.

Internet dating has generated a growing number of users since the mid-nineties. In August 2009, comScore WorldMetrix estimated that there were 113 million visitors to personals sites worldwide (Radwanick, 2009). Piper Jaffray Investment Research estimates that Internet dating sites generated revenues of \$1.3 billion in 2008 in the USA, rising to \$1.7 billion by 2013 (Friedlander, 2010).

Juniper Research estimates the USA mobile dating market at a little under \$550 million (Vivanco, 2009). In China, the Internet dating industry is expected to reach 140 million registrants in 2010 (Foster, 2010).

In 2002, a Wired magazine article forecasted that in twenty years the idea someone would look for love without looking for it online would be silly. It would be akin to skipping the card catalog to wander the shelves because 'the right books are found only by accident.' The marketplace for love is becoming more efficient (Griscom, 2002).

Executive Opinions

Opinions of 39 executives and spokespeople of Internet dating companies from around the world were gathered. They were asked

1. How has Internet dating changed society
2. How will Internet dating change society in the future

This paper is purely and entirely a collection of opinions of internet dating industry leaders. All the responses were received between September and December, 2010 and are included verbatim, in full, in the Appendix.

Internet Dating Is Empowering And Socially Acceptable

In the past people met through school or work or their religious affiliations or through social events (Miller). Real world dating at parties is intimidating for some people. Especially if they are shy (C. Lerner & D. Lerner). Three sociological trends have fueled the rise of the Internet dating industry. People are staying single for longer, are more busy and time constrained than ever, and are more migratory than ever before (Davis & Ginsberg).

Before Internet dating the process of meeting people was far more random. Internet dating has empowered singles to find better relationships by searching a larger pool of candidates and using sophisticated search tools (Titterton). People have started to trust and experiment more with Internet dating and the perception and acceptance of it has improved (Boyd).

The stigma surrounding online personals has dissipated over the last ten years (Falzone). A recent Friendscout24 survey revealed that 88% of German couples who met through online dating talk openly about how they met (Bruder). One in six couples meet through online dating according to a 2009-

2010 survey of 11,000 couples [link to study](#) (Match & CMB, 2010)

But There May Be Too Much Choice

We're definitely in a new era of the mating game. The process of meeting people has been greatly changed and simplified. Physical attribute selection tools allow dating site users to eliminate huge groups of the population who don't meet specific desires. Users search by body type, and hair color and eye color. What people think they want may not be what they actually need however.

People are becoming overly selective as a consequence of their increased ability to search and choose. It is now possible to search all over the world rather than just limiting date searches to immediate locales (Hartley). However, singles still prefer to meet a partner who lives less than 23 miles away (Simoncini).

We can connect right now with many people in many places based on a rapidly growing, curated amalgamation of personals data. The market for meeting people is hugely more efficient because of Internet dating (Schildkrout). Users are addicted to choice because they have a huge array of choice now and this has caused their expectations to rise. By creating checklists users are limiting their choices and closing their minds to possibilities (Parfitt).

Singles use Internet dating like a virtual shopping spree (Lieberman). Internet dating has made people more disposable (Falzone). People are less inclined to settle for mediocre relationships. Internet dating provides choice and hope to those looking for new relationships (Harding). Dating sites enable singles to be more fussy and selective (Simoncini). Partner selection pickiness will probably increase further over time. Our ability to very quickly reject large numbers of candidates will increase.

Along with this, our ability to find awesome matches and build sustainable, positive, life-enhancing relationships will improve (Schildkrout). People can be more selective and find people who are more compatible, which can only have a positive effect on society (Evans).

Niche Dating Sites Have Emerged

The Internet has helped people move beyond using just time and place to define community. Common interests define community now (Wolfe). People of different cultures can find each other and meet more easily. Those who share the same core values and beliefs can vet more effectively using the Internet. Singles can review profiles on dating sites to gain a greater initial understanding of other singles (Moesker).

It's possible now to use many more search variables for finding partners through online dating, than in the real world. This is helping people to meet who might not otherwise have met. Niche dating sites are providing a melting pot experience enabling people to explore and meet around cultural preferences, core values and lifestyles (Chan). There has been a considerable increase in the number of mixed couples in the USA, especially among younger generations (Lang, 2005). Internet dating has been responsible for some of this ethnic diversification in society (Cervantes).

Online dating sites, especially targeted niche dating sites, help users define and hone the qualities that interest them. When singles read vivid descriptions of other singles online, they get a better sense of what they want or don't want in a partner. When they go through the process of describing themselves, it gives them a more complete understanding of what they hope to find. Therefore, they are more apt to

find someone who's closer to them in values and interests, which is better for the health of their relationship (Orbuch).

Sexual Liberation

Dating sites speed up the getting-to-know-you process for singles. Niche dating sites offer up more select pools of people and speed up this process further (Bradley). For busy single mothers Internet dating is a revolution (Winchester). Women are increasingly making the first move online and selecting guys, which certainly suits the guys. There's a liberation of sexuality happening online and sexual minorities, inter-sexed people, and gay people are enjoying a newly found freedom. (Lord).

The melting pot that the United States set out to be is now the online world. Internet dating is contributing to the mixing of cultures around the world and changing the way society thinks of race, religion, gender and sexual orientation. People of diversity are being brought together and through that process their families, cultures, religions, and gender roles are being more united in society (Perrine).

The Internet is a powerful medium for helping the spread of ideas. The idea of being gay has become ok, partly as a consequence of the rise of the Internet. Gay bars are experiencing a downturn in business because of gay Internet dating (Crutchley). There are fewer back alley encounters and less use of sex clubs.

Gays can disclose their HIV status online. This rise in disclosure has contributed to a reduction in the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and infections. Gay men were some of the earliest users to take advantage of the web, starting with AOL chat rooms. Gays are now more identifiable, recognized (Perrine).

Cheating Is Easier

The percentage of divorced singles has doubled in the last 30 years in the USA. Seven percent of singles were divorcees in 1980. In 2009, 15.6% of singles were divorcees. Forty-three percent of adult U.S. residents are unmarried. The highest percentage ever (Veciana-Suarez, 2010). Internet dating may be partly responsible for a rise in the divorce rates (Hartley).

Cheating is easier and fidelity is suffering. Long term relationships are becoming rarer (Shurey). There's less and less accuracy in Internet dating profiles (Chernin). People can become who they want to be and lie about their marriage status (Cunningham). As few as 7% of the profiles on Internet dating sites are wholly accurate which is a problem for users, and the Internet dating industry.

People still have some reservations about using Internet dating. Next generation services will de-emphasize the manual profile creation element of online dating and emulate real world introductions processes more closely (Parfitt).

The rise of Internet dating has also resulted in less prostitution as people no longer need to search on the streets. They can find casual relationships online (Jones-Middleton).

It is now quicker and cheaper to find a lover than ever before. Low quality, unhappy and unsatisfying marriages are being destroyed as people drift to Internet dating sites and discover better matches online. However, marriages are more stable because people now have the ability to select people from a larger pool and make better, more informed choices (Tian).

Matrimonial Services Act As 'Yentas'

In India Internet dating is most prevalent in the form of matrimonial services. Online matrimonial services are now mainstream in India. These services are unusual in that 20% of profiles are registered on behalf of singles by their parents, relatives and friends (Janakiraman). Internet Matrimonial services have had a significant impact on society. Over 20 million people get married in India every year, mainly through their families.

People in India want more choice in their matchmaking decisions and want to make these decisions more collectively with their families. Indian Matrimonial services have helped many of the 25 million Indian diaspora living outside of India to connect with each other and with singles back in their native country. Countless cross-border marriages have resulted, with an unimaginable social impact (Mittal).

In the United Kingdom dating sites are fast approaching the popularity of pubs, as a place to meet singles. Which is a huge change for the British. Societies around the world have realized that people can take charge of their search for love. Internet dating sites are now the third most popular way to find a partner in Europe (Simoncini).

Safety Is Still An Issue. Virtual Dating Is An Answer

The Internet has become a much more social place (Titterton). It is changing due to new social networking and communication technologies and services. Skype telephones and online video are helping people talk for free. Virtual conversations and virtual dating take place online before couples ever meet (Hinds).

Wooing with the written word is once again fashionable (Shurey). More information is available online for researching the reputations of suitors before meeting. Dating sites will provide some form of certificates for proof of identity in the future (Yonter).

Safety will be improved further with the introduction and more widespread use of background checks and screening (Cunningham). Internet dating is helping to kill loneliness and break down communication barriers by providing a more gentle and safe environment for singles (Boon).

Location Based Services Are Becoming Popular

In the future, more singles will use location based services on smart phones to find matches in their immediate vicinity (Koper). In 2009 the sale of smart phones reached 172.4 million units worldwide, up 23.8% on 2008 (Gartner, 2010). Real-time video chat will become more common on mobile devices. This trend will help deliver two extremely important factors humans use when looking for compatible partners, sight and sound (Abelon).

The rising use of mobile phones will fuel the growth of Internet dating (Simoncini). Mobile phone features are helping improve the Internet dating user experience so couples can hookup more easily (Kunkel). In the future, location based services will allow singles to learn about a social venue and research the potential for meeting singles there. They will be able to see how many singles are there and connect with them on the phone, in real time (C. Lerner & D. Lerner).

Science Meets Internet Dating

The Internet dating industry is becoming more scientific and matching algorithms are becoming more sophisticated (Buenger). As these algorithms improve, match quality will improve. In the future singles will wonder how they could possibly have limited themselves by not using Internet dating (Winchester).

The fringes of society will blur into normal society as people become more educated on other lifestyles and become less judgmental. People will be defined less and less by their location and more by how they think (Wolfe).

Internet Dating Is Becoming More Of A Social Norm

Online dating is changing the way people date and marry in America. Around 1 in 6 people who marry in America, meet through an online dating site (Blatt, 2010). The convenience and accessibility of Internet dating will drive increased user-ship and help it develop further into a social norm. As more people gain access to the Internet, online personals will continue to flourish and become an integral part of society (Boyd).

In the future the Internet will seamlessly merge with our daily routine, and in the same exact way online dating will perfectly blend in singles' dating agendas (Bruder). Improvements in the matchmaking algorithms and technology will help decrease divorce rates (Moesker). Internet dating will further increase the number of happy couples in the world (Schmid). Ultimately, online dating will evolve to help make the world a happier place (Parfitt).

References

- Blatt, G. (2010). Stay up to date: Introducing the official Match.com blog. Retrieved from <http://blog.match.com/2010/05/17/stay-up-to-date-introducing-the-official-match-com-blog/>
- Foster, P. (2010). Chinese website runs competition to find brides for millionaires. Telegraph. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/7849316/Chinese-website-runs-competition-to-find-brides-for-millionaires.html>
- Friedlander, W. (2010). Finding the right online dating service. The Los Angeles Times. Retrieved from <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/feb/14/image/la-ig-modernlove14-20100213>
- Gartner. (2010) Gartner says mobile worldwide mobile phone sales to end users grew 8 per cent in fourth quarter 2009; market remained flat in 2009. Gartner Group. Retrieved from <http://www.gartner.com/it/page.jsp?id=1306513>
- Griscom, R. (2002). Why are online personals so hot? Wired Magazine. Retrieved from <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/10.11/view.html?pg=2>
- Lang, S. (2010). Interracial relationships are on the increase in U.S., but decline with age, Cornell study finds. Cornell University Chronicle Online. Retrieved from <http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/nov05/interracial.couples.ssl.html>
- Match.com & Chadwick Martin Bailey. (2010). Match.com and Chadwick Martin Bailey 2009-2010 Studies: Recent Trends: Online Dating. Chadwick Martin Bailey Online. Retrieved from http://cp.match.com/cppp/media/CMB_Study.pdf
- Veciana-Suarez, A. (2010). In midlife, they're unexpectedly single. Miami Herald. Retrieved from <http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/09/05/1806940/in-midlife-theyre-unexpectedly.html>
- Vivanco, L. (2009). Online dating 2.0: They met on Twitter. Chicago Redeye. Retrieved from <http://www.chicagonow.com/blogs/redeye/2009/11/post-8.html>

Appendix

The following list of people responded to the survey questions and contributed to this paper.

1. Dan **Abelon**, CEO & Founder, **Speeddate.com**
2. Andrew **Boon**, CEO & Founder, **Boonex.com**
3. Bradley **Boyd**, CEO & Founder, **Setformarriage.com**
4. Franklin **Bradley**, CEO & Founder, **TryCupid.com**
5. Martina **Bruder**, CEO, **FriendScout24.com**
6. Jens **Buenger**, VP International Business, **Friendscout24.com**
7. Larry **Cervantes**, Managing Editor, **AnastasiaDate.com**
8. Greg **Chan**, VP Sales, **Global Personals and Fling.com**
9. Lawrence **Chernin**, CEO & Founder, **BrainiacDating.com**
10. Jonathan **Crutchley**, Chairman & Co-Founder, **Manhunt.com**
11. Tasha **Cunningham**, CEO, **DontDateHimGirl.com**
12. Carrie **Davis** and Mandy **Ginsberg**, VP Comms & GM North America, **Match.com**
13. Paul **Falzone**, CEO & Founder **eLove.com & The Right One & Together Dating**
14. Lavinia **Evans**, VP Product Development, **People Media & Match.com**
15. Brett **Harding**, CEO & Founder, **Lovestruck.com**
16. Roland **Hinds**, Author & Executive Producer & Lecturer, **TruVue Relationship Radio**
17. Murugavel **Janakiraman**, CEO, **BharatMatrimony.com**
18. Fern **Jones-Middleton**, Product Director, **RSVP.com.au**
19. Maciej **Koper**, CEO & Co-Founder, **Przeznaczeni.pl**
20. Ed **Kunkel**, COO, **Infinity Personals & SexSearch.com**
21. Travis **Hartley**, CEO & Founder, **Meet Market Adventures**
22. Clifford **Lerner** and Darrell **Lerner**, Co-Founders, **SNAP Interactive**
23. Dr. Carole **Lieberman**, M.D. Psychiatrist, **Author of Bad Girls: Why Men Love Them**
24. Kathryn **Lord**, Love Coach, **Find-A-Sweetheart.com**
25. Anupam **Mittal**, CEO & Founder, **Shaadi.com**
26. Jerry **Miller**, CEO & Founder, **FarmersOnly.com**
27. Fred **Moesker**, Online Marketing Manager, **ChristianCafe.com**
28. Dr. Terri **Orbuch**, Ph.D., Relationship expert for **People Media**
29. Justin **Parfitt**, CEO, **FastLife.com**
30. Patrick **Perrine**, CEO & Founder, **myPartner.com**
31. Aaron **Schildkrout**, CEO & Co-founder, **HowAboutWe.com**
32. Peter **Schmid**, CEO, **Parship.com**
33. Marc **Simoncini**, CEO & Founder, **Meetic.com**
34. Paul **Shurey**, CEO & Founder, **IllicitEncounters.co.uk**
35. Jason **Tian**, CEO & Founder, **Baihe.com**
36. Jeff **Titterton**, VP Marketing, **Zoosk.com**
37. Dan **Winchester**, CEO & Founder, **Freedating.co.uk**
38. Shaun **Wolfe**, CEO, **Tangowire.com**
39. Sandra **Yonter**, Director of France, **Parship.com**

1. Dan Abelson, CEO & Founder, Speeddate.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating has changed society in several ways. Most importantly the Internet's pervasiveness has increased (at exponential levels) the chances of singles finding compatibility just by sheer numbers alone. Today, almost everyone has access to Internet services and jumping online to meet new and interesting people is extremely easy to do.

Online dating has evolved to where singles have begun using services as way to screen potential mates through real-time chat – especially in our downed economy. When you consider that a typical first date costs over \$100, singles want some sort of insurance that it will be money well spent. Online dating has delivered this security blanket of sorts by allowing singles to connect and interact online to find that initial spark before deciding to take things to the next level by meeting in person.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

When you consider that over 172.4 million smart phones were sold just in the last year alone and over 300,000 iPads were bought in its first week, the potential of mobile-based dating becomes clear.

As more and more singles turn to their mobile-devices for meeting others, the face of online dating will continue to evolve including the way love connections are made. The greatest difference will be speed and convenience. In addition to using smart phones and tablet computers to check statuses, change profiles and send messages while on the go, singles will soon have the ability to connect and interact with others via real-time video chat. When that day comes, it will usher in a whole new era in online dating by delivering two extremely important factors humans use when searching for compatibility - sight and sound.

2. Andrew Boon, CEO & Founder, Boonex.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating has become an "acceptable" way to find partners and made the search more targeted for many. Before internet dating singles had to rely on chance or start an aggressive "hunting", which is less than flattering in most cases. Now, it all easy and clear - single? ready to start dating? enter plentyoffish, match, okcupid, etc and get ready for your first date in week or so. It's effective and it works. So, it's getting more and more mainstream and if you see a single person, you'd think they just don't care to find a partner yet, not that they can't.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

Internet dating has a chance to kill loneliness and communication barriers that are still problems of mullions of people. It allows gentle and safe way to introduce singles into dating new people, which, per se, may be a life-changing experience. In the future we may see majority of people meeting via dating websites, which only rare exceptions meeting "by chance" offline.

3. Bradley Boyd, CEO & Founder, Setformarriage.com

How has internet dating changed society?

The Internet dating industry over the past 10 years has changed our society and the perception towards internet dating dramatically. In the early 1990's during the dot com era, internet dating had a bad stigma and many people didn't trust meeting people off of the internet. If we fast forward to today, There are dating sites that serve just about any persons want or desire and have the ability to match you to like minded people. There wasn't one event that bought peoples trust into the internet dating realm but as time went on, internet dating sites started advertising both online and on TV, people started to trust and experiment with it. In today's economy and society we have adapted a role of knowing exactly what we want and are willing to pay for it.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

The internet dating industry continues to change and evolve with people and their habits. With that being said, in the future I can see where people will more and more people will use an internet dating service mainly due to the convenience and accessibility. Our society has embraced internet dating and has now become a social norm. It's no longer weird to meet someone off of the internet. As more and more people gain access to the internet, the popularity of internet dating will continue to flourish and be an integral part of society.

4. Franklin Bradley, CEO & Founder, TryCupid.com

How has Internet dating changed society?

When you think about it, Internet Dating has been around since AOL hit the Internet with Dial-up connections and Chat Rooms. Most people using the Internet today don't even remember that far back. But those early days of anonymous "meetings" kicked off a revolution in how we meet, interact and even communicate with our friends, family and partners.

While popular figures proclaim 1 in 5 partnerships begin through on-line dating sites today, the figure is certainly much larger. Before the majority of dating sites began, the Internet was there, forging introductions, expanding communications between individuals and creating a whole new meeting place for people of all ages and partnership persuasions.

"Has Internet dating changed society?" Thanks to the Internet, people know more about one-another before they even meet. They often decide who to meet and who to avoid, without a face-to-face or even voice-to-voice meeting. They likely have missed meeting some great - and some terrible - people because of the Internet. In the process, they have lost social skills and replaced them with typing skills and perhaps even become more articulate because of all that typing.

Are they better off? Probably not. But perhaps. Many of us feel the process of elimination should be done face to face...for others, however, it's all about saving time and money. With that criteria, the Internet is a clear winner. Until someone mentions the old adage..."you get what you pay for."

But you can't role back the clock. Internet dating is here to stay. Mobile technologies just lock it in even more tightly. That being the case, niche-dating sites like TryCupid.com are the wave of the future,

where you can seek out those who fit your primary objectives in a partner. Gay, Black, Studious, Party Goers, Religious, etc. Find the group, and then narrow down the search to the “one” person who completes you. It's the way things are moving, folks, and it will rapidly become the primary way partnerships are discovered and cemented in the future.

How will Internet dating change society in the future?

We are becoming less social (despite the “social media” tag of the Internet). We already avoid phone conversations by using text messages. E-mails replace letters and traditional business correspondence. We sit behind a screen instead of going to a meeting, restaurant, park or library. Do we get more done? Absolutely. Do we get that “more” done better? Time will tell, but I'm guessing the answer will be “no”.

But when it comes to introductions and dating, the outcome is bound to be much improved. While there is much that can be said for meeting people different from ourselves, the fact is, we are attracted to people of similar passions, backgrounds and dreams. Similar races, sexualities, religious views, etc. Niche digital dating sites allow us to zero in on primary needs and desires. Because of that caveat, these sites and their Internet platform will speed up the “getting to know you” part of dating. Only time will let us know if this is good or bad. But it is the future, so we need to learn how to deal with it.

TryCupid.com has the formula for digital dating. It's in place and growing. If society is truly in for a change because of the Internet, TryCupid.com will be a major player in implementing this change for the good.

5. Martina Bruder, CEO, FriendScout24

How has internet dating changed society?

As much as social networks have changed the way people socialize, online dating has revolutionized the way people fall in love. 15 or 20 years ago, getting to know somebody via an ad used to be a taboo. A recent survey conducted in Germany by FriendScout24 revealed that today, more than a third of the German population at the age of 18 to 65 has been looking for a partner online. And 88% of the couples who have met via online dating services talk openly about how they got to know each other.

Using internet dating has become as common as meeting people through friends, at work or at a party. Online dating now is a contemporary solution that is broadly accepted and welcomed by society. And, as our lives in the 21st century have become more and more fast-paced, online dating eases many hurdles of today's busy life. It helps look for a partner in a very targeted way and thus makes especially women a lot more self determined in finding the right partner.

Online dating ensures that the approach you choose is much more defined by you. You are the process owner. You are in control. Therefore, it is a very emancipated way to enter a relationship. Online dating has also helped people to feel a lot more at ease with finding out about another person before they actually get involved with this person. It helps you feel more secure and go into a relationship with a better understanding of who this person is.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

Seventy nine percent of the German population believe that by 2020 online dating will have an even increased usership – 70% assume that first dates will happen online, right on the spot. The survey we recently conducted shows that people are full of positive expectations for a digital future. This also means that society is ready for it. Whilst “digital” has been a kind of “avant-garde” lifestyle in the last years, with smart phones and mobile apps it has become a natural part of our day-to-day life.

In the future, the internet will seamlessly merge with our daily routine. And in the same exact way, online dating will perfectly blend in singles’ dating agendas. In addition, we believe that online dating will further enrich our lives in the future: Having more opportunities to look for a partner, you are in full control of your love life. Wherever, whenever and whoever you want to date, you will be setting the agenda and defining the rules of dating. This makes a big difference, especially for women.

6. Jens Buenger, VP International Business, Friendscout24.com

How has internet dating changed society?

People have learned to integrate internet technology and communication even into their most private areas of life. Within a very short span of time it has become natural to look for, find and get to know people online either as a completely new way to find the right one or to augment traditional ways of dating offline.

People have learned that besides potential risks regarding data privacy concerns there are tremendous opportunities in getting a chance to communicate with people in completely new and fascinating ways.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

I am confident that internet dating has already become “normal” for the young generation. Search algorithms will become even more sophisticated – as will the results.

Additional groups of people will learn to use idating in the future – for example older folks.

7. Larry Cervantes, Managing Editor, AnastasiaDate.com

How has internet dating changed society?

I think you have better stats than I, but I believe it’s more than half of people actively dating in the U.S. met their mate online. So online dating has changed society by introducing technology, and more variety to choose from. I don’t know what greater or lesser percentage of success this has spawned, but it would be interesting to scan the numbers...greater success as the rise in internet dating has increased?

Extend this to international relationships, internet dating has increased the number of interracial couples, mixed marriages and ethnically mixed children, ethnically diversifying society. Che Guevara said he envisioned a world where we’re moving towards being comprised of “one big Mestizo race”

It also secures a more lasting marriage....The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) reports that "...marriages arranged through these services would appear to have a lower divorce rate than the nation as a whole, fully 80 percent of these marriages having lasted over the years for which reports are available." Compared to a 50-55% divorce rate in the U.S.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

How will it change society? The above will continue to progress while stimulating the growth of new services and technology to make it even easier to find a mate, and make people across the globe more accessible to each other.

8. Greg Chan, VP Sales, Global Personals and Fling.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating has allowed people from all walks of life to connect based on a multitude of different variables that are uncommon in a mainstream setting. For example, the largest way people usually meet are through friends or at a social setting (such as a bar, church, organization like work/school). Now, two people who normally wouldn't have met due to geographical barriers, religious differences, etc. can meet and get to know each other with little risk. If one person doesn't want to continue dating or getting to know the other person, they can simply not respond to the other parties messaging.

It is also a safer way to meet people (although some would argue otherwise) because there is a wealth of information available on the web via google--and the right queries in context on your potential date's name can bring back good background information.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

I believe in the future, internet dating will help make the world an even bigger melting pot. You will have people from different continents start to marry out of their ethnicity. It will help break down traditional barriers that would never occur through its offline counterpart.

9. Lawrence Chernin, CEO & Founder, BrainiacDating.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Forget serendipity - online dating is the most efficient method to find the right partner! Simply scan through databases of thousands or millions of singles and find exactly what you're looking for. That's just not possible by going to a dark and loud bar, or getting hooked up on blind dates through your friends. The choices are quite limited, and many a friendship have been lost due to setting up a bad blind date.

Specialized dating sites cater to unique needs. On niche sites like Brainiac - which caters to singles who value intelligent relationships, women should not feel a need to play dumb or to dumb down to make a guy like them. There is someone out there who is going to like them for who they are.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

There is still a big problem in accuracy of information, even singles do not portray themselves accurately. I see more integration with independent "human" third parties like dating coaches to help people navigate through the process.

10. Jonathan Crutchley, Chairman & Co-Founder, Manhunt.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Our niche of the market is gay dating, or more specifically, men seeking men. Without question internet dating has turned the gay community on its head, and, as our site Manhunt.net is the leading site in the United States, we have been bombarded with blame and criticism. Prior to the internet age men met other men in gay bars or nightclubs or in often dangerous cruising areas, or perhaps in public bath houses. Feeling shunned by the rest of society, many gay men lived in their own neighborhoods of major cities such as Greenwich Village in New York, the Castro in San Francisco, or West Hollywood in Los Angeles.

Now that the internet makes it so easy for men to find each other, bars and other businesses that cater exclusively to gay men are seeing a downturn, and even whole neighborhoods where gays used to live near each other are changing. The internet has also hastened the process for gay men to become more accepted by the rest of society. The internet spreads ideas. Our entire society is changing at internet speed.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

As I mentioned above, the internet has brought about a great deal of change to our niche of the market, but the internet is still changing, and, as it does, the rest of society changes with it. We are currently seeing a large rise in the use of mobile telephones for internet applications. Gay men use GPS locator devices on these phones to find each other and meet, even as total strangers.

Much of Manhunt.net's business may migrate from the world wide web to the mobile phone. We're at least seeing the beginning of this trend. I don't have a crystal ball to tell me what technical advances may occur in the future, but as they do, society will change with it.

11. Tasha Cunningham, CEO, DontDateHimGirl.com

How has internet dating changed society?

From the vantage point of the women who read DDHG every day, I would say it have made it possible for people (men and women) on the dating scene to be whomever they want to be. A married father of three can suddenly become a single, childless stud with just a few clicks of a mouse. But I also think it has given society greater possibilities when it comes to meeting someone. With internet dating, you don't have to be confined to your small town or city. You can literally find people to date from around the world.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

I think the industry will focus more on safety. I think people who sign up for memberships on internet dating sites are going to be background checked or screened in some way. I think at some point in the future, such screening and background checking will become mandatory. I also think free internet dating sites will fall out of favor, while paying sites, which are better policed, will become the standard, particularly when it comes to safety.

12. Carrie Davis and Mandy Ginsberg, VP Comms & GM North America, Match.com

How has internet dating changed society?

To answer this question, you first must consider how certain sociological trends have enabled the boom in online dating. To begin, people stay single for longer. By the time a person is in his/her thirties, he/she is no longer dating their friends and their social circle has shrunk. Second, people are more time constrained than ever. Work hours and commutes are longer and we are busier and more scheduled than ever. Online dating is the only kind of dating that gives you complete flexibility. You can date at home and in your bathrobe at any hour of the day. Third, people are more migratory than ever.

Traditionally, family and community played a bigger role in how people met. Now that people do not live where they grew up or went to school, they've become more isolated and the need to connect beyond their immediate environment becomes greater. For all of these reasons, online dating has accelerated, creating a tectonic shift in how people meet. One in five new relationships and one in six new marriages are now between people who met through an online dating site. Those numbers represent a fundamental change in our cultural attitudes and behaviors. [link to study](#)

How will internet dating change society in the future?

There are more than 96 million single Americans yet only a few million use an online dating site. In the future, any lingering stigma about online dating will vanish and the majority of single people will date on the Web. As adoption of internet dating grows internationally, there will continue to be major shifts in dating behavior around the world as well.

13. Paul Falzone, CEO & Founder eLove.com & The Right One & Together Dating

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating has changed the perception of meeting people through a traditional bricks and mortar dating service. The stigma that once surrounded dating services years ago is gone and dating over the past 10 years has become more socially acceptable. Internet dating has enabled millions of single love seekers to find each other, connect with each other, and establish relationships which would never have existed. Internet dating is everywhere, you cannot turn on your computer without being inundated with singles ads etc. In today's instant gratification world it has become another way to accomplish your goals quickly. Internet dating has given people the opportunity to meet quantity over quality.

The negative effects from internet dating is, it has created an illusion that there is an endless pool of compatible people available and that someone better will most likely be just a click away. Internet

dating has made people "disposable" and the sad reality is that many of these love seekers are still out there after many years of "winks", "pokes" and whatever else they do for attention. You can make up a profile that is 180 degrees from who you really are, there is a lot of misrepresentation and fraudulent activity on the internet.

As Brad Paisley once sang "I'm so much cooler online". The internet has cocooned society to a point where it may become difficult for a human being to interact with any other person than with a screen or a keyboard. In conclusion, internet dating has made it easier to meet people, but that comes with a price.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

Internet dating will change society in the future by advancing technology in ways for example, virtual dating will come into play, you pick the landscape and go on a virtual date, etc. I think they will bridge themselves where will be a blend of dating and social media sites.

The internet dating leaders will keep evolving, bringing better tools, technology, matchmaking etc.,. They must expand their level of service for any internet dating company to survive in the future. They must offer more to their clients such as matchmaking, because, it will monetize the consumer at a much higher price point which is critical to the company's profitability and success. They must offer more high touch options. If this does happen internet dating will be more successful in their matchmaking needs which will result in a much happier clients. This will impact society in the future in a positive way by offering singles better opportunities to develop relationships, families and better lives.

14. Lavinia Evans, VP Product Development, People Media & Match.com

Before Internet dating, singles didn't have a lot of options for meeting people. They could brave the dreaded "blind date" arranged by others, or they could hope to run into the right person at the right time-maybe at a bar or a party. Some demographics, like single parents and seniors, found it especially difficult to meet their match using those methods. But everything changed with the advent of online dating and more importantly, the introduction of niche-oriented or "targeted" dating sites like SingleParentMeet.com and SeniorPeopleMeet.com. The demographics that often faced the greatest challenges in the off-line world encounter an entirely different experience online. They have their choice of entire communities of singles seeking to connect with people just like them. The days of relying on chance meetings or amateur matchmakers are over-you can take your romantic future in your own hands and make things happen.

With so many possibilities out there, no one has to "settle" due to a lack of options. Today, you can be much more selective about who you become romantically involved with. It's easy to envision a future in which increased selectivity results in more relationships between people who are truly compatible. And that can only have a positive effect on our society as a whole.

15. Brett Harding, CEO & Founder, Lovestruck.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Above all, internet dating has helped people of all ages realise that there's no need to settle for a

mediocre relationship. It's essentially provided choice and hope. For the younger groups, its more about choice: they use internet dating to supplement the existing ways in which they meet potential partners. There are a myriad of specifics for which the internet dater can choose a partner: compatibility, relationship preference, profession, interests, friends of friends and, most recently, proximity.

And for the older age groups its more about hope: There are now so many ways to meet singles without even having to step into a bar or club, something that many feel uncomfortable with. Plus, it provides a completely new way to meet people outside their existing circle of friends – many of whom their ex is sure to know.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

With: more and more people working from home/remotely any remaining stigma evaporating...

...Increased smartphone penetration

...internet dating will undoubtedly become the most popular way to meeting a partner. And, as the dating industry finds ever-more inventive ways of enticing people to trial their service, it will only serve to increase society's belief not to settle for second best.

16. Roland Hinds, Author & Executive Producer & Lecturer, TruVue Relationship Radio

Internet dating has allowed allowed some people to date multiple people without other people's knowledge. It has also allowed dater's to have a wider pool of people to choose from in various part of the country and world narrowing the geographical gap. Although the industry is changing, the only difference is making sure the people in the profile look the same in their photos. Moving into the future internet dating is changing due new technology like Skype, telephone video, and online video.

These new advancements are allowing daters to have virtual dates and virtual conversation in real time. As for the online video postings, it allows someone to get a better idea demeanor of the profiled person's personality, Then there is FaceBook, which provides information about the types of people an individual may interact with daily. I believe in the future technology will continue to advance and most people will be able to feel as if they are living together by sharing their lives.

17. Murugavel Janakiraman, CEO, BharatMatrimony.com

How has internet dating changed society?

In India, matrimony has changed the way Indians getting married and today it has become one of the main sources of finding a life partner for Indians who has access to internet. In India it's not only used by singles and it's also used by parents/siblings and relatives. Around 20% of the users are registering on behalf of their son/daughter/siblings/relatives and friends. Today online has become one of the most trusted source of finding life partner contrary to decade ago where we had the challenge of getting people registering online. Today online matrimony has become main stream...

How will internet dating change society in the future?

The industry has been evolving. With the emergence of social internet we need to look at how to leverage some of the social aspects of internet into online matrimony services. I see more people will get married thru online matrimony services and it'll really become the largest source of people find the life partner.

18. Fern Jones-Middleton, Product Director, RSVP.com.au

- Enabled people to meet that they otherwise wouldn't
- Provides a level of comfort that when you're ready for a relationship again you can find it much easier
- Gives people a greater sense of control over their lives – able to take steps to finding a partner
- Has made it easier for people to have affairs
- Make people more picky – in the sense that when online, people have higher expectations than they otherwise would
- Different types of friends – people have 'online friends' they've never met
- Scammers have increased, although not just because of online dating, dating sites are targeted and provide a good platform for scammers if dating sites don't take precautions for their members
- Helped people define what they want
- Changed sexual behaviors – people open to what they want/after. There have been reports that the frequency of prostitution has decreased as a result of men being able to obtain sex online.
- Efficiencies in finding a partner
- Potentially more marriages/relationships (and children) that exist that otherwise wouldn't have.

19. Maciej Koper, CEO & Co-Founder, Przeznaczeni.pl

How has internet dating changed society?

It change a lot about way we find our partner today in a few minutes you can be signed to the dating site you like and have a access to millions singles around the world in case of Przeznaczeni.pl we have a thousands references / stories about the people who find thanks to our website that their love is living just a next block, or in city 500 km away anyway their will never meet without our internet dating work:)

How will internet dating change society in the future?

Dating in the future improve and make finding second half even easier than now. Thanks to personality tests we will see who will works good with us and thanks to mobile and geolocalisation we could even find that our dreamed partner is siting at the same park we are walking know

20. Ed Kunkel, COO, Infinity Personals & SexSearch.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating has had a significant impact on society for the better and for the worse. Gone are the days of having to go out and not only hope you come across someone that catches your eye, but also the lengthy process of getting to know them. No mystery meets from an ad in a newspaper or morning hangovers next to someone you can't remember anything about. Online dating allows someone to find someone from the comfort of their own home at their own pace. No worries about the immediate first impressions with someone you don't even know is someone that you really want to be with.

Conversing with someone and learning about their interests from their profile lets you weed through the process much quicker. More importantly, much safer as well. Unfortunately, there are no guarantees in life so while it is safer, there is still the chance of meeting people with malicious intent. Or, as we have learned, there are also people out there that create "personals websites" strictly to prey upon the unsuspecting. Not in terms of physical violence but focusing more on phishing a customer's personal data.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

Internet dating companies are bringing their products to mobile platforms. This is essential because mobile phones are trending toward more use and more convenient access than having to use a laptop or desktop. Features on mobile devices are taking online dating and making it an even better user experience. Finding people faster and not being tied to logging onto a computer allows communication between potential couples to happen at any time.

21. Travis Hartley, CEO & Founder, Meet Market Adventures

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating has brought on some incredible changes to a single person's life. Be it good or bad, we're definitely in a new era of the mating game. The process of meeting people has been greatly simplified. Looking to find someone to go out tonight? Just hit an online dating site and message 200 people. Someone's bound to say yes, and there you have your plans for the night. Not a fan of clubs and bars? Go online and look over photos and descriptions of all the people that are spending their time on the internet instead. We've also now gained the option to search for and interact only with the types of people we choose to meet. Imagine walking down the street and clicking a button to make all of one gender disappear. Following that you could click again and have all the blondes and brunettes leave your sight.

Now take your remainder and click again... *poof* no more brown eyes or green. Congratulations... now the only ones walking the street are the ones with the physical appearance you're looking for. Another great addition to the online dating experience is seeing what people are into. Generally profiles will speak about what a person enjoys doing. Those who are still inclined to getting outside and having some fun can grab some great new ideas. Think about it... we make friends and spend our time around similar personalities. If he or she is into the activity then there are bound to be many more of the same hanging out in the same place. Let's take into account the single traveler. Looking to meet people while you're abroad? Dating sites don't just have to be for dating. You can send a bunch of

messages to people in the city you'll be visiting and see what the singles are all doing for fun there.

It all sounds great, doesn't it?

Well... for every plus there's definitely a minus.

With online dating it's possible to be overly selective. Where it was once meeting based on chemistry, people are now meeting based on what they think is best for them and what they interpret a person to be. We all have our own little filters and what one person may mean with a word or two, we can very easily misinterpreted. We may hold on to our interpretation and carry that with us for a first meeting.

Now someone who was perfect is the last person you ever could have wanted to meet and you've spent a lot of time talking with someone virtually when you could have had the same effect in an instant while meeting organically from the get go. In addition what a person thinks they want, may not be what they actually need. They may be searching for what suits their mindset without understanding why it just won't work out for them. We also have more divorces coming on. Could online dating be part of that? Who's to say. All the sites seem to enjoy speaking about how many relationships and marriages they've helped create, but they never talk about how many ended up in complete shambles.

When it all comes down to it society has taken big changes as a result of online dating. Instead of only dealing with your immediate surroundings you can look at people all over the world. It's made it's way into what we watch, what we hear, and what we read. It's a whole new era of meeting "the one" and the world has finally started to accept it in the last 10 years at best.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

When it comes to our future and how internet dating will change it...I don't think we'll see much bigger a change from what's going on now. I think internet dating will adapt as our technology adapts (maybe virtual reality or 3d holographic dating), but beyond that I think people will start turning towards meeting people face to face again.

We need human interaction to be happy and people are realizing this more and more. As online dating hits it's plateau more and more organized activities will be making their way back into society. It will probably always be out there, but I don't think it will be as prominent in the future.

22. Clifford Lerner and Darrell Lerner, Co-Founders, SNAP Interactive

How has internet dating changed society?

Online dating has made it infinitely easier for people to meet and connect with each other through the ability to tailor a search to your personal preferences and instantly find hundreds or even thousands of potential matches with the click of a mouse. More importantly, internet dating creates the notion of "possibilities" for countless people who are shy or find it difficult to meet people in the "real world."

Approaching an attractive stranger in a bar or on the street is an incredibly intimidating concept to millions of people, but internet dating gives them the opportunity to put their best foot forward through a profile and a much less scary initial email. For some, internet dating is simply another tool to help find a date or a mate, but for others it opens up a whole new world of dating possibilities.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

The proliferation of mobile dating will change how singles approach all aspects of their life. As mobile usage and location technology improves, location-type features will influence most decisions made by singles. Whether it's a restaurant, store, bar, or vacation spot, you'll be able to learn a lot more about the venue and its potential for meeting singles and you'll be making all types of decisions on where to go based on this information in real-time about singles at the location.

23. Dr. Carole Lieberman, M.D. Psychiatrist, Author of *Bad Girls: Why Men Love Them*

Internet dating has its pluses, such as being helpful for people with little time for dating. But, it has changed falling in love from a romantic serendipitous meeting to a virtual shopping spree. Many people hide their fear of intimacy behind internet dating. It's a way of limiting rejection to an impersonal pain, instead of diving in face to face, and risking getting hurt on a deeper level. But by summarizing what you want in a partner into a few key words, it can take the romance out of love. Internet dating is fine as one of several ways to find love, but it should not be the only way.

24. Kathryn Lord, Love Coach, Find-A-Sweetheart.com

How has Internet dating changed society?

Incredibly. And not just for singles.

I was single in 1995 when Match.com first got going, still single in 1997 when I heard about Match and signed on. I remember vividly what it was like to be single before modern Internet dating. Where were other eligible singles? Who were they? How do I identify them? How will I know if they are interested? Will they be interested in me?

No longer are these questions a concern, at least for those bold enough to take the necessary steps to go online and look for love. Match.com and all the other dating sites that have come and gone have cut through the enormous chore of helping singles find each other, more effectively and efficiently than ever before.

Additionally, Internet dating finally leveled the playing field between men and women when it comes to finding love. Now, women do not have to sit and wait for men to make the first moves. Many women are taking their love lives into their own hands, picking men they are interested in themselves, and making the first contact. And men like it.

I see Internet dating as facilitating one more step in the liberation of sexuality in general and a benefit to the culture as a whole. It's a piece of the rapid softening of the attitudes about gay marriage. It has helped the coming out processes of gays and other sexual minorities. By creating an atmosphere that makes clearly looking for love a positive, healthy, and normal activity (rather than sordid or desperate), more and more people are "coming out of the closet" in all kinds of ways. It probably contributes to the increasing intolerance for public duplicity, such as conservative politicians caught playing footsie in toilets.

Too, facilitating relationships between older people has been a wonderful trend. As more and more older folks get computer literate (or the ones who already are get older), Internet dating will really help those who are lonely, who are made single by death or divorce. My mother was widowed at 75 and couldn't imagine anyone being interested in her at that age. While she didn't meet her new husband online, being a new bride at 81, marrying in front of a huge crowd of celebrating gray haired friends made another statement of the relaxation of attitudes around sex and love.

How will Internet dating change society in the future?

I could not have imagined, in 1997, where my signing up on Match.com would lead. And we don't know where things will be fifteen years from now in 2025. Things happen unpredictably, and more will happen in the years to come.

We all know that Internet dating took a huge step into the mainstream (coming out of the closet itself) after 9/11. Suddenly people yearned to connect, and what was really important sorted itself out quickly from what was not.

What I see though is an increasing acceptance of Internet dating as perfectly reasonable. Why would a single NOT use the most incredible and efficient method ever to find the best partner? It will become so understood that no longer will the "We met on the net" stories be news. In fact, not using dating sites will be seen as odd and backward. As shopping, media, and everything else imaginable move to the Internet, so will finding love.

Internet dating will continue to be a big part of the wave of changing attitudes about sex and relationships. While it is hard to imagine what we do not know, "coming out," transparency, being who you really are and not being embarrassed about it is certainly the trend. I think the next group we are going to hear about are the inter-sexed: people whose gender was not clearly male or female at birth. There are lots of those folks around, up to 4% of the population. Hidden up until now in a binary world, as attitudes about differences soften, we will be hearing more about them. Dating sites will need to add a category or categories to accommodate them.

We don't think twice about the "I am a man/woman looking for a man/woman" statement that all dating sites use (which by the way was revolutionary when Match.com included gay and lesbian choices as equal and the same as heterosexual). But what about those folks who are someplace in between what we think of as clearly male or female? How will the dating sites handle these people, and what will it signal to the culture as a whole?

25. Anupam Mittal, CEO & Founder, Shaadi.com

How has internet dating changed society?

In India Internet Matrimonial have had a significant impact on society. In a country characterized by break-down of the joint family system, exposure to western media, increasing national migration, negative perception about dating, and few potential opportunities to meet potential life-partners casually, the Internet acts as the perfect medium to bring two people together for marriage. Add to this the significance of marriage in the Indian context and one can see the kind of pressure the youth can go through to find a potential life-partner. Over 20 million people get married in India every year, and

many of these people are married through their families.

While this system is accepted widely, there is an undeniable trend towards people wishing to exercise more choice when it comes to making one of the most important decisions in their lives. The Internet offers the perfect medium for families to make this decision collectively. Further, over 25 million Indians live outside of India. By connecting this Diaspora to people back in India, Shaadi.com has facilitated countless cross-border marriages which will lead to social impact unimaginable at this point. Finally, the Internet provides a unique platform to people who may have otherwise had to live the rest of their lives by themselves. Very recently a 65 year old man found a 55 year old woman on Shaadi.com and found companionship. In a country like India this may have been very improbably without the Internet.

26. Jerry Miller, CEO & Founder, FarmersOnly.com

How has internet dating changed society?

In the past relationships started in only a handful of ways: either the couple grew up together, met in school, religious establishment, work, social events or were fixed up. Internet dating created an entirely new way of meeting people that otherwise would have never met.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

I truly feel internet dating will reduce the divorce rate based on matching up like-minded people right from the start.

27. Fred Moesker, Online Marketing Manager, Christiancafe.com

How has internet dating changed society?

- allowed more people to connect - especially those who are too busy with work and other obligations, or are too shy to expand their social circle by more traditional methods
- allowed people who would never normally meet (due to different social circles, etc) to actually interact and meet (and more!)
- allowed people from different areas of the world and different cultures to connect and/or understand cultures they normally may not be familiar with
- allowed people to more easily find others who share their core values or interests (niche dating sites or simply narrowing down options on mainstream dating sites)
- allowed for individuals to get to know and understand someone quicker than by traditional methods (by reading a detailed profile)
- brought compatibility matching to the forefront in forming relationships (before online dating having access to compatibility matching 'formulas' and insight was not readily available -and certainly not as efficiently as it is with some online dating services)

- provided a place of encouragement, advice and community among singles via forums included on many online dating sites

- increased migration as singles find a match from outside their region and move closer to them

How will internet dating change society in the future?

- further bring people together, except more immediate and in a more personal (face-to-face) manner: think mobile dating apps meshed with location-based technology (thus a mix of both online and traditional - experiencing the benefits of both at once - filtering and connectivity of online plus the more-immediate face-to-face of offline)

- improve match compatibility over time (with improved matching algorithms), thus helping to decrease divorce rates

28. Dr. Terri Orbuch, Ph.D. aka "The Love Doctor", Relationship expert for People Media's SeniorPeopleMeet.com

How has Internet dating changed society?

Online dating sites expand the pool of potential partners. People you meet through regular activities or blind dates tend to fall within a circle that already surrounds you. Online dating opens up a bigger and broader world while still affording you total control. You choose the geographic scope for possible suitors: across town or across the country. Online dating sites offer more control and a wider pool of potential partners to people in our society.

Also, since people have extremely busy lives these days (work, family, health), online dating sites give people the opportunity to find that someone special. You can explore new people from the comfort of your home, at any hour of the day or night. You're in control of where and when and how.

How will Internet dating change society in the future?

Maybe it's been hard to identify exactly what you're looking for or find a sizable pool of people to consider. Online dating sites, especially targeted online dating sites help you define or hone the qualities that interest you.

Any time you see people and vivid descriptions of them, you get a better sense of what you want or don't want in a partner. Also, when you go through the process of describing yourself to others, it gives you a fuller understanding of what you hope to find. You are more apt to find someone who's closer to you in values and interests, which is better for the health of a relationship.

29. Justin Parfitt, CEO, FastLife.com

How has internet dating changed society?

By connecting the consumer to a huge array of service providers, the Internet has made us addicted to

choice. Users can find the lowest price and bypass the middle man with ease. This is fine when we're talking about flights, music or groceries.

With online dating however, the consumer is also the deliverable, but this point is not adequately communicated to the user, so when the prospective online dater pings a hottie whose world he wants to rock, he does so expecting success - he's not used to being turned down by an airline or a bunch of grapes because he's bald, can't spell and has the dress sense of a rat with a gold tooth. In a broader sense, the proliferation of choice combined with the L'Oreal phenomenon (I'm worth it!) has made people pickier, and in many cases has unrealistically raised peoples' expectations about the sort of person they can reasonably expect to attract.

The list of parameters on search based websites has also encouraged people to create a checklist of 'must haves'. By rigidly adhering to checklists singles are closing their minds to possibilities - doesn't have a degree? Too short? Forget it.

Ultimately it's impossible to tell if there's chemistry until you meet someone face to face. If online dating sites aimed to connect apparently compatible people in the real world as quickly as possible then that would be fine, however the current business models actively discourage users from meeting in the real world. These blocks, masquerading as 'guided communication' and safety concerns are in fact mechanisms designed to maximize revenues.

However, there is a palpable sense of hope that online dating has brought to divorcees, rural singles, and the countless 20 and 30 somethings whose friends have all hooked up. There is no longer any need to pluck up your courage and head to a nightclub, mutton dressed as lamb, to 'get back out there'. Now that's something worth celebrating!

How will internet dating change society in the future?

There is only so long that businesses can hold off from delivering the services that people actually want and need. Single people very much do not need to fall for a virtual partner only to find that when they finally cross the country and meet 6 month down the line that they really are rather icky. So while the sense of hope I refer to above is a wonderful thing, it can quickly go horribly wrong, and expectations can quickly spiral out of control. Dating services of all sorts should encourage local dating - it's green and it's basic common sense.

No algorithm can possibly predict genetic compatibility or the way that pheromones will work their magic, so singles need to be connected in person efficiently and with as little disruption to their routine as possible. Let their bodies can work out if they're right for each other. And of course trust needs to be brought back into the equation. By some estimates, only 7% of dating profiles are wholly accurate, so its no surprise that many people have reservations about using online dating services, so the next generation of online dating will de-emphasize the advertising element and will emulate real world introduction processes more closely.

Internet dating hasn't benefited from an 'iPod' like tipping point where service, business model, brand and technology come together in a transformative way. Sooner or later that time will come, and, just like the iPod, next generation dating will be sexy, fun and cool - and everyone will want to do it even if costs twice as much as the next best thing.

This breakthrough service will have solved many of the current problems with online dating. It will be

popular and will attract a broader range of users than at present, the sort of people that wouldn't use the present range of services, in other words the sort of people that online dating companies are keen to attract. Other lookalike services will pop up, and because the new approach will be better at forming relationships, many more healthier, more satisfying relationships will result. Online dating will make the world a happier place!

30. Patrick Perrine, CEO & Founder, myPartner.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Gay men were some of the earliest users to take advantage of the web, starting with AOL chat rooms to meet others that shared the same desires. Today, idating continues to help gay men and lesbian women find each other in a safe and controlled environment. Fewer back alley encounters, less mysterious "dark room" sex and the decreased need for sex clubs to meet other like minded gay men and women have all been reduced because of the visibility in the online space. Because of this exposure, the ability for transparency on the web (such as the ability to disclose ones' HIV status before ever investing time into someone else) has contributed to the reduction in the spread of HIV and other STD's/STI's.

It has also allowed men and women seeking same sex partners to be identified, recognized and organized... all lending itself to the awareness and establishment of visible sub-sets of the population to seek long term relationships. After all, the lawsuit against eHarmony to provide same sex services was at the same time as the continuing fight for legal gay marriage, and not ironically, they go hand in hand.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

Idating will continue to be on the forefront of societal change. Just as gay men seeking on other gay men in the early years of AOL chat rooms helped create and define the early internet culture and what we now have as social networking and idating sites.

With the expansion of the industry, the transparencies of cultures and the overall simplification of globalization, internet dating will continue to contribute to the mix of cultures and the marriages of identities.... forever changing how society thinks of race, religion, gender and sexual orientation. The Melting Pot the United States once set out to be is now the online world, bringing together two people that would have never otherwise had the chance to meet. Thus bringing together their families, their cultures, their religions, their gender roles, the sexual expressions.

31. Aaron Schildkrout, CEO & Co-founder, HowAboutWe.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Well, it's important to note first, how the internet has changed dating. The internet has contributed to and is a reflection of an overarching tendency in capitalistic society to condense time and space. Everything is closer together, from a functional and interactive perspective. And the past is more easily accessible in the present. The effects of this broad tendency on people's pursuit of love, companionship, and sex is staggering. We can connect right now with many people in many places based on a rapidly growing, curated amalgamation of data.

The market is hugely more efficient. This in turn has a reciprocal effect on society. People expect to - and this will be increasingly the case over time - be able to access people anywhere, anytime, based on complex search requests. We already very much expect this for information (show me pictures of soda cans from the 1950s). We are coming to expect this for people (show me people who grew up in Newton, MA who are working in finance, who have children, and are living now in NYC). We also expect communication to happen in real time or close to it. We feel a great sense of access. We feel entitled to this even.

Obviously such a feeling of access affects our pursuit of love and so forth...the whole world (versus, say, the city we live in) will, increasingly, feel like the market for our partner(s). Our pickiness will probably increase. Our ability to very quickly reject large numbers of candidates will increase.

Hopefully, our ability to find awesome matches and build sustainable, positive, life-enhancing relationships will increase. And I hope that our ability to do amazing things in the real world with real people will also increase. We will make plans more effectively. We will find things to do that match our propensities much more than ever before. We will, more and more, use the internet to actually get offline, to meet face-to-face, to have fun, to forge happy connections, to live vivaciously and beautifully. At least, I hope this is what happens.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

See above.

32. Peter Schmid, CEO, Parship.com

How has internet dating changed society?

In recent years it has become harder and harder to find the right partner: there is pressure on people's time as they find that more demands are made on them, for instance by their careers; the number of divorces and single parents is increasing and there is a lack of opportunities to meet new people. In this context, professional online matchmaking services like PARSHIP succeed in providing single people with access to a variety of suitable matches and flexible search options, and there's no need to go out in search of a chance encounter or to rely on the possibility of meeting someone special through friends or at work.

And no matter what age you are, online matchmaking provides an ideal solution. The Internet has opened up possibilities for people in target groups who have traditionally found it particularly hard to find someone. For instance, the opportunities are enhanced for singles aged 50-plus who are in search of love. All this represents significant change in society.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

In the longer term, I believe that, as the adoption of online matchmaking becomes still wider and more accepted in all layers of the society, the way people find a partner will change essentially. More and more couples will start their relationship online and the Internet will become the place to find a new partner. It will also be acknowledged as the best route to finding the RIGHT partner. PARSHIP will contribute to this growth and we will continue to invest in scientific methods to achieve still more successful online matchmaking for our members – and of course to create happier couples.

33. Marc Simoncini, CEO & Founder, Meetic.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Online dating has gathered serious social momentum and today dating sites are the third most popular way to find a partner. Perhaps most impressively, dating sites are fast catching the pub in the UK as the most popular destination – a massive cultural change.

With this in mind It's clear that online dating sites have fundamentally changed the way we meet and select our partners, but they've also responded to wider sociological shifts and challenges.

As a society we've realized that can we take charge of our search for love and it's right to do so. We wouldn't leave other such important life decisions to fate alone, so why leave who we are going to spend the rest of our lives with? Dating sites have helped drive this change because they give us the tools we need to proactively find that person.

With the ideal that love doesn't always find us, comes a new attitude towards partner selection. We've found that over the past year 49% of people say they have become fussier in what they look for in a long term partner. Dating sites undoubtedly give us more choice and more convenience to find a better match. So if you are a lover of Alain de Botton and don't want children, you'll be able to identify these potential deal breakers from simply reading someone's profile and perhaps avoid embarking on the wrong relationship altogether.

Furthermore we're an increasingly time poor, disparate society, with family scattered around the globe, who don't know the names of our neighbors, but we still crave proximity and community which is why the majority of us want to meet a partner who lives within a 23 mile radius. Through localized and advanced search, dating sites can satisfy this need with ease.

It's therefore not surprising that today people turn to the internet to help them find love just as naturally as they do to manage all other areas of their lives.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

The challenge of finding love isn't getting any easier, we are increasingly more considered in our choices and demographic studies are consistently finding the number of singles to be growing. Euromonitor predicts by 2020 253.8 million single person households in Europe. These factors coupled with the proven success rates of sites like Meetic are what will make dating sites the most popular way to meet a partner within the next two years if not before.

And we can predict that mobile will fuel our growth : the latest research by the Yankee Group (June 2010) found that Smartphone volumes will grow to 38 percent of all handsets by 2013, representing the largest growth opportunity within mobile devices. So there are very good chances that we will go on changing society in the future...

34. Paul Shurey, CEO & Founder, IllicitEncounters.co.uk

How has internet dating changed society?

From small beginnings internet dating has become part of mainstream society and had a significant impact on human relationships. It has opened up a hugely greater choice to would be daters. It has created a scenario where wooing with the written word has once again become fashionable (harking back to the days of love letter writing, but in a far more immediate fashion). It has also impacted on the way people embark on relationships, allowing hedging of bets and pursuance of multiple online relationships in the quest to find Mr or Mrs Right.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

More of the same as outlined above. However there is a danger that people will become more commitment averse as they have the huge choice of online dating opened up to them. It will become ever easier to find someone new as soon as cracks appear in a current relationship. Thus long term or life time relationships are likely to become rarer. Cheating also has become easier as online dating as become more mainstream. Thus fidelity is suffering and is likely to suffer even more in the future.

35. Jason Tian, CEO & Founder, Baihe.com

How has internet dating changed society?

1. Find a lover becomes more quick, cheaper.
2. Single life becomes more interesting because all kinds of dating activities organized by internet dating.
3. Marriage becomes more stable because they select their partner from much larger candidates pool compared with before.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

In the future, internet dating will improve the overall marriage quality of the society.

1. The internet dating will improve in matching technique such as personality test based matching, thus the singles can have higher possibility to find a more compatible soul mate.
2. The combination of matching technique and social network will involve more users into internet dating, thus, the singles have much larger matching user base and will have more opportunity to find a loved one.
3. Some low quality marriage may be destroyed when somebody find a more compatible one from internet dating service and a re-marriage will improve the marriage quality.

36. Jeff Titterton, VP Marketing, Zoosk.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Online dating has empowered single people to find better, high-quality relationships by giving them easy access to a vastly larger pool of potential dates, and then providing them with sophisticated tools

that help them narrow down that pool and find the right matches for them.

Before the advent of online dating, most people had no choice but to rely on personal connections such as family or friends, or random chance such as a meeting at a bar or bookstore, to find people they wanted to date. This meant a relatively small pool of potential dates available to any one person. Classified ads in the newspapers were of course an option, but a limited one – with just a few lines of text and no photos, they were a poor predecessor to the sophisticated profiles that are available online today. Today's singles can post a profile on an online dating site and have access to thousands if not tens or hundreds of thousands of potential dates in their area within minutes.

A large pool of potential dates alone was a major improvement over pre-Internet dating, but what really helped make online dating the ubiquitous social tool it is today was the evolution of increasingly sophisticated search and matching options that help people narrow that large pool of potential dates. These tools come in two general forms: proactive search tools that enable users to narrow their search criteria based on a variety of attributes, and matchmaking technologies that use the powers of science and technology to connect people with each other. With the evolution of these tools, millions of people who might never have met each other in an offline world have had the opportunity to connect and form life-changing relationships.

Here at Zoosk, we focus on aggregating a very large pool of singles and then applying our best technical minds to help users find not just a lot of dates but the right dates. We've found that this combination – a big pool of singles to choose from, and the best tools to navigate and narrow that pool – help our members find great dates and long-lasting relationships.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

In the past several years, the Internet has become a much more social place. First, the advent of social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter has turned the web from one of walled-garden individual web sites into an open, social web in which users can freely share content and interests across multiple web sites. Second, the more recent rise of smart phones has enabled people to connect to the Internet in a deep and meaningful way no matter where they are.

This shift to an anywhere, anytime social web will make online dating that much more powerful to single people in the future. Singles can already date from almost anywhere – from dating sites themselves or via dating applications on smart phones and social networks – and anytime – from their laptop at home or a smart phone on a bus. As society spends more of its personal time online and technology-driven matchmaking improvements make the likelihood of finding a great relationship via the web even greater, comfort levels with online dating will reach all-time highs, and generations that came of age in an online world will see finding a date online as natural – or even more natural – as finding a date at a friend's party.

37. Dan Winchester, CEO & Founder, Freedating.co.uk

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating provides an additional means to find a partner, which complements the existing offline methods which people have traditionally used to meet someone - such as dinner parties, nightclubs, workplace and activities. Operating a general site like FreeDating.co.uk, I see this having different

impacts on different types of people, depending on their level of access to those traditional offline methods.

So to someone who is quite active socially, internet dating might mean that they can now look for a partner on a Sunday evening, when there is nothing else going on. But for someone who has limited opportunities to socialize with potential partners, such as single mothers, internet dating is nothing short of a revolution.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

I expect that internet dating will get better and better at either matching people using algorithms, or providing the information that users believe is important in a potential partner. I'm sure we will find it laughable that people used to limit their choice of partners to a few 100 people in a nightclub, or the 50 people in their office - the people who still rely on these methods will be seen as the weird ones!

38. Shaun Wolfe, CEO, Tangowire.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet Dating has facilitated, and maybe helped accelerate, a continuing societal shift on what defines community. Traditionally, community has been defined by time and place. Increasingly, community is being defined by interests and time-shifting is the norm. People are no longer confined to meet people their friends know, or who show up in a local bar on a Friday night. People can come together around common interests and preferences.

The internet facilitates this meeting of community in the business world (LinkedIn), friends and family (facebook), and finding your true love (online dating) across town, across the country, or across the world. The very definition of community has changed forever – at best internet dating pushed the process along, at worse, it facilitated the inevitable.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

As the next generations grow up with the idea of community without physical boundaries, the notion of “normal society” and “the fringe of society” blur. A group of 5 Emo kids in your school used to seemed on the “fringe” of “normal” society, but millions of emo kids around the world seems pretty normal.

Internet dating will continue to drive this very intimate idea of shared community to the most intimate relationships. The ability to search for your soulmate in a community where you aren't judged is everything. Big Beautiful Women can find the love of their lives without fear of ignorant and harsh judgment. Internet dating and other online social sites will further drive people to define themselves less by where they live and more by how they think and what makes them happy.

39. Sandra Yonter, Director of France, Parship.com

How has internet dating changed society?

Internet dating is a new tool for people to meet. But it's also a tool to meet more people from everywhere, especially outside our own circle (professional/family & friends/hobbies) and to also select people, according to personal wishes (hobbies, cultural interest, religious belief, etc...). Internet dating has still a huge potential and represents a great hope for those who are still singles.

How will internet dating change society in the future?

More people will meet through Internet dating websites and as it is proven by one of our studies (PARSHIP Study 2009 "Singles & couples"), people will be happier with a partner they found on the Internet. People will also be able to search for more information on the Internet about the potential partners they could meet (thanks to social network & Google, a little search is quick & easy).

But on the other side, we'll have to face more threats (scammers is one aspect, mistaken identity is another one) and people will be more demanding while using these services. Dating websites will have to adapt to customers' wishes and not only remain - for some of them - a huge database. They will have to focus more on security and data protection and also provide the customers with additional services, such as certificates, proof of identity, advices, activities."