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ABSTRACT

This Pilot Project is based on the behavioral use of dating apps or services used by people who are looking to date in the dating industry and how these online services or apps impact the user's dating experience.

This study has begun as someone who had gone using such dating applications felt the barriers of user experience relaying into the physical aspects of the dating experience. It then has pushed to carry out the study after learning from personal dating, others who felt similar experiences.

The purpose of this study is to anticipate gaps in the user journey that can be altered or implemented which could offer contributing value to a user's dating experience from using these dating apps or services.

Name	Definition
IOT	Internet of things – tools used to connect to the internet
Gen Z/Generation Z	Group of people born between 1997 – 2012 (aged 9 – 24)
Millennials	Group of people born between 1981 – 1996 (aged 25 – 40)

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Background/Introduction

The perception of dating and the behaviour or how people date has changed over the years from the meaning of what dating is and dating trends or norms. The meaning of dating has taken different forms depending on the perception of one person to the next. The meaning of dating according to the Cambridge English Dictionary defines it as spending regular time with someone in a romantic relationship setting (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). Zoosk, an online dating platform, explains dating as everything from casual hook ups to exclusive relationships without the title of being in a relationship and its definition can vary between people from not so serious of casual and 'hook ups', to dating several people, to specifically seeing someone before and if going in relationship together.

Furthermore, dating behaviour over the years has changed in how people date and the changes in the dating industry. Before internet dating, dating was pursued by face to face interactions and dating services were created in print media, personal ads and questionnaire matchmaking (Archive.pov, 2013). Through the birth of the internet, online dating changed the dating industry, offering opportunities for both people and businesses, making dating more convenient, more chance to match and ability to meet beyond someone's geographical locations (Orlando, 2021).

Research Aim

The aim of this research is to understand and identify existing areas of dating apps which either enhance or dampens a user's experience of dating. This is to indicate and anticipate a solution to offer and contribute to the user experience during their dating experience. Furthermore, carrying out testing will bring a conclusive result if there is still a gap and opportunity for online dating services to continue enhancing a user's experience in dating and continuing to meet user needs.

Research Question

How can user experience design influence user's dating experience through mobile dating apps?

Research Objectives

- To distinguish behaviour and trends of current user experience of existing mobile dating apps used in the dating industry.
- To anticipate a design gap that could help bring value to users to offer a better dating experience.
- To test the design prototype to evaluate and conclude if the design concept usability (UX) brings any other value to their dating experience and dating industry.

Methods

In this study, a systematic review approach was used to help refine initial results. A systematic review is an overview analytical method to review secondary research and data surrounding a formulated question (University Libraries, 2022). Results were focused on industry reports, articles and peer reviewed journals relating to the dating industry and consumer trend with dating. Initial scoping was done overusing Google Scholar. Other use of scoping searching was used over in other web articles and Solent online services such as Mintel and Statista.

Use of search strings was implemented in using the Boolean logic which combines search term of 'AND', 'OR', 'NOT' to enable refined searches (Full Sail University, 2021). This was used to narrow focusing area with dating to people using online dating services/apps. Below shows Figure 1 of the used string searches carried to refine research on dating.

Figure 1

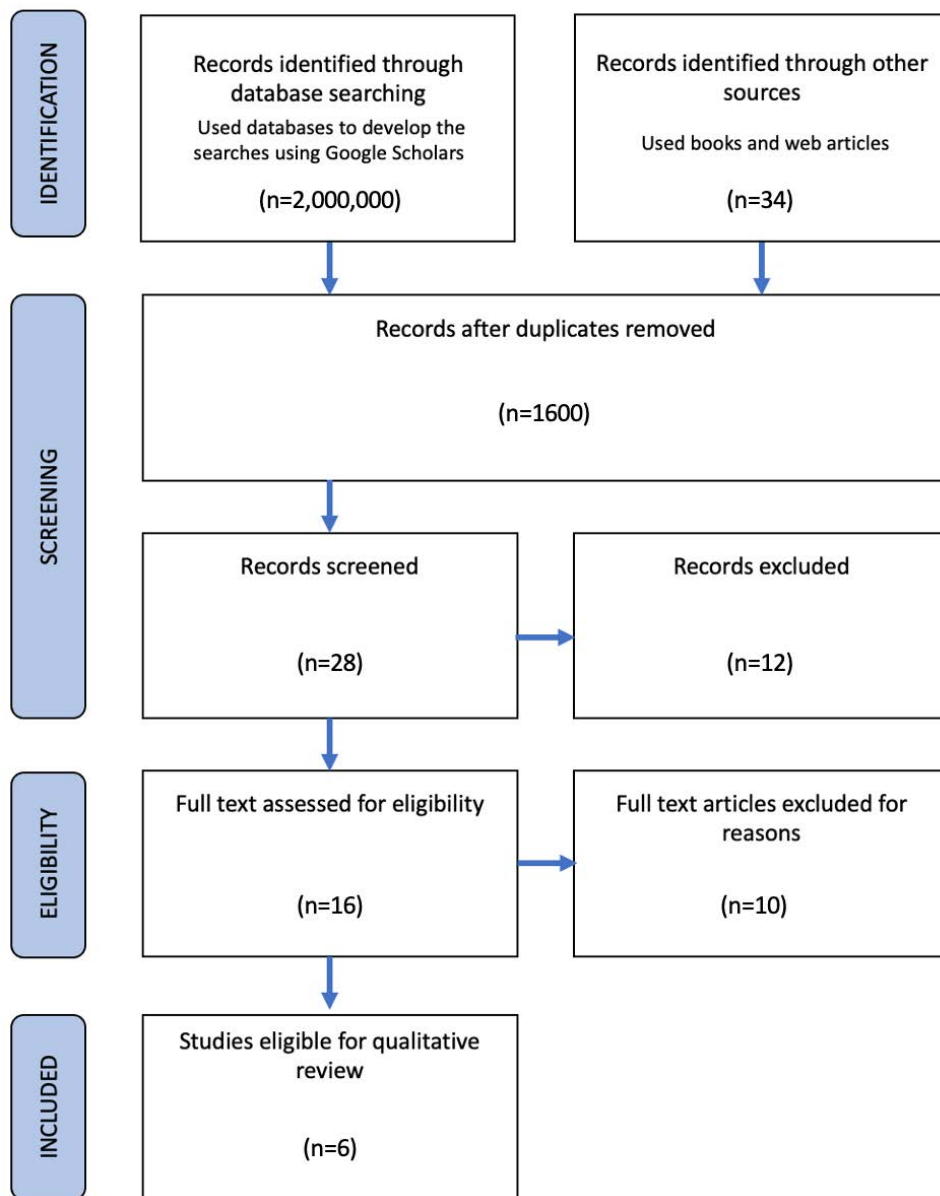
1.	Dating and Gen Z
2.	Dating and Millennials
3.	Dating and technology
4.	Online dating and Millennials
5.	Online and offline dating
6.	Dating and covid lockdowns
7.	Dating and usability (UX)
8.	Dating and user behaviour

Process

From the initial scoping of using the listed string searches, results were shown over 2 million combining records related to the string search entries. To refine searching, use of filter searches to selected year range from 2016-2022 and only reviewed articles brought article numbers down overall. approx. 30,000 records. Duplication of records was then removed among going through the search processes, followed by removing of any records that were considered not for the purpose of this study. The records which were not considered for this study were among violence in dating, underage users of online dating and study papers outside Europe. Following further screening of eligible records for this study was conducted, assessing and removal full text articles to refine required results. These processes were also carried out with repeat filtering methods on other sources and reaches through google search, Statista, and Mintel.

Limitations

From the results of the research carried out, a limitation was insufficient data relating to the behavior into users' attitude towards existing online dating services/apps. For example, users who pay for a premium service or feature or use several dating apps/sites, what are the reasons for this and what are the benefits of this. While this study's focus is to identify a gap in online dating to then contribute additional value to users experience in their dating experience, it is important to identify key areas that are beneficial to users with already existing online dating app/services.



Literature Review

According to a Statista report in 2020, the current market size of users on online dating services is approximately 9.7 million; with sub segments of online dating in matchmaking and casual dating together to increase this number by another 3.3 million by 2025. UK user demographics show 78.6% of users are male and 21.4% are female. Among age demographics, 25-34yr olds are the biggest users at 44.4%, followed by 35-44yr olds at 29.9% and most users are of high income at 54%, 20.7% medium income and 25.3% low income (Statista, 2020).

Dating apps are continuously changing to compete in the competitive market and looking for ways to attract users to their platforms and convert to a paying customer. Tinder, a dating app launched in 2012 became a leading success in revolutionising the online dating world, creating a fun, easy-going and sociable experience with simple swiping (left for no and right for yes) which helped reduce stigma of online dating. However, these features produce early stage of user experience, it has moved towards a gamifying experience. With simple swiping taking people on face/bio value, this has increased shallow behaviour and feeds into mindless scrolling which creates a numbing experience and less engaging (Mintel, 2019).

Certain dating apps provide a feature that allows users the ability to pay to be top of the list of profiles shown (Mintel, 2019). As this may offer users to be seen sooner and opportunity to match, it also negates the perception of matches being based on personality, making some experiences artificial.

Dating apps do offer users more control with who they like or don't like with a swipe of the thumb. They also offer further control to the user's experience with the ability to know who likes them, without the other person knowing, so the user can make a better decision to whether they would like to pursue things further or not. However, some of these features are only available in a premium service subscription, leaving free version with some limitation to the user experience. As video content is an increasing use of media consumption, according to Mintel, video content has not hit popularity through online dating services or applications as expected by dating services who provide it (Mintel, 2019).

As discussed in the Background section, online dating offered a lot of opportunities to the industry and offered convenience to users and more chances to match. However, online dating has also brought along a lot of stigma, with the perception of people who turn to online dating as desperate. A study in 2002 covering internet behaviours was conducted with two cohort groups, one group of undergraduates aged between 18-25 and the other Ph.D. students aged between 22-50 (with mean age of 30) it showed within both groups a higher number in negative attitudes towards using the internet to meet romantic partners (Robert J. Stephure, 2009).

Online dating has grown and further evolved into dating application and smartphone devices, with simple swiping making dating and matching more convenient to users. As dating performed increasingly popular in recent years, many people still prefer the methods of traditional dating meeting someone in person. Data shows that 37% of users have used a free dating service, 35% of users paid to upgrade their dating services, have never met up

with anyone and 56% of people asked are not using online dating services as they prefer to meet people in person and think online dating is not effective in creating a good dating experience (Mintel, 2019).

Further studies also show the 45% of people who used free online dating sites/apps across 12 months user more than one and over 33% people who paid for online dating site/apps paid for more than one (Mintel, 2019). As Mintel explains, this can be seen as good for the industry showing users are open to trying different dating services however, it could also suggest some indication of online dating fatigue. While another study also shows users are facing dating fatigue, showing that 21% of Gen Z were facing dating fatigue and stopped using the dating site and 90% of those said reason to be at least one frustration when using them (YouthSight, 2021).

These may give some indication to that, although apps are there to make a business, while they may offer free service features they have limitation such as limiting swiping unless converting to a paying customer who can then be seen at the top of the queue to those who don't pay losing their chance to be seen, which gamifies the dating experience, which could leads to reasons of seeing dating fatigue and users not who never met fair opportunity to match, making the focus less on user experience and more on business success.

Sinek talks about how Millennials have struggled to form deep meaningful relationships and self-satisfaction partially due to the increased use of technology. In his talk about millennials in the workplace, Sinek explains Millennials have grown up not learning key social fundamentals skills through their adolescents as most of their social development has been influenced through the surrounding of social media and digital devices. Where he says produces numbing endotherms relating through a device and addiction and millennials expresses this creates superficial friendships that can have fun with, but their friends will go if something better is comes along.

Sinek continues to describe how Millennials have also grown into a world of instant gratification, where the ability to stream a movie or ordering an item from Amazon can be done instantaneously. Alongside dating apps with instant swiping, he mentions there is no need to learn social coping mechanisms in person (Crossman, 2016).

Instant gratification could be seen as impatience and this could relate to dating too with so many options to choose from in matching people and the time it takes to build a meaningful connection with someone. It could be seen as more gratifying to move on when someone better comes along. This could have some correlation relating back to how the dating industry of users feeling dating fatigue and stagnant showing peak stimulation within the dating service provided.

Findings Summary

From the findings it can suggest that there remains a gap for opportunity to enhance user experience in the online dating. As the findings show users are feeling fatigue with how online dating apps function. While new way's function or features are introduced to the

online dating platforms to help enhance user experience and bring them out of data fatigue. Majority of users prefer the physical element of meeting in person.

Concluding that optimising a user's dating experience, this leads to the next part of this study to indicate how to merge the physical aspect of dating to blend with the online dating experience to optimize the user experience and meet the overall research aim. This follows to analyse existing dating apps, identify key UX principles used for these dating apps and conduct primary research with industry experts and/or dating app users to further investigate and identify suggestive solution to any problem solving of online dating.

INTRODUCTION

Following the background and introductory research of the literature review on how can user experience design influence user dating experience through mobile dating apps? It concluded that there are signs where elements in the online dating could be changed or added to help give users a better dating experience. With users feeling data fatigue from use of dating apps and many people using more than one dating app at a time does suggest current dating apps are not fulfilling to give good user experience.

The research question remains open to how can user experience design influence a user dating experience through mobile dating apps? Continuing to meet the research objectives to explore to distinguish behaviour and trends of current user experience of existing mobile dating apps, to anticipate a design gap that could help bring value to users for a better dating experience and to test the design prototype to evaluate and conclude if the design concept usability (UX) brings any other value to users' dating experience. This part of primary study is to determine further insight to user behaviour in existing dating apps and to anticipate if and where a design gap could be focused on to offer the final phase of the research to design a concept for enhance usability in a user's dating experience via online.

Dating apps and online services

There are many dating apps in the dating industry, each offering similar features of swiping, matching, and messaging but some of their features differ how they create business revenue. As part of the study, it is important to understand the apps and its features through user experience to become informed of design gaps.



(Sensor Tower, 2019)

Please refer to appendix 'dating features and competitors' how different dating apps the function across a premium service

Methodology

Approach

The study is taking a deductive approach towards the research, where investigation has been taken into existing secondary research and theories to now extending the research studies to tests hypotheses that emerge from those theories (pressbook, 2022).

Research Design

Research has shown that predominately people aged between 25-34 are the biggest users of online dating (Statista, 2020). These being Millennials generation group as of 2019 aged 23 to 38 years, born between 1981-1996 (Pew Research, 2019), therefore aiming the research towards that target audience. However, the study is open to the wider demographic which will give date to compare the different demographics of ages and gender and to identify difference and similarities.

Field Work

This study has taken a mixed method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative research. The quantitative data is gathered through a survey to understand user behaviour in a broader area and explore solutions towards enhancing a user's online experience.

The qualitative data is gathered through independent interviews with participants who have/are using dating apps, to further refine particular dating behaviour and insight into design gaps in the usability of dating apps.

Sample Frame

The study of the quantitative research is carried out to wide audience, namely a demographic age of 18-55 years. This is to gather more varied data to analyse if there are any similarities between the age groups seeking more interactions through dating apps for a better experience.

Limitations

During the study, attempts were made through LinkedIn to gain some industry experts insight on user behaviour and the development of the dating industry. The Limitation comes from lack of response. See appendix 'Industry expert request'.

Another limitation could be lack of response to the survey, and/or lack of diversity of respondents, meaning less rich data for analysis and comparison.

Ethics Form

see appendix for 'Ethics form'

Survey respondents

A survey was carried out to find out more about what would drive customers to meet and use a dating service. With a sample size of 467 respondents aged 18-55+. Below showing questions asked and evaluating responses. Please refer to appendix 'Survey response results' for information.

Q4 What have/would you be looking for through these dating sites? Please tick any that applies

A leading of 87% of respondents are seeking for a relationship when using these dating apps, following others 37% in friendship and 32% for hookups.

Q5 Have you used any of the following dating apps or sites to meet dates? Please tick any that applies

Respondents were asked of what dating apps or online services they have or currently are using. While showing leading apps across Bumble, Tinder, Plenty of Fish (POF) and Hinge.

Q6 Have you used more than one dating app or site at a time?

57% of the respondents said to have used more than one dating app.

Q7 If used more than one, what are the reasons of using more than one dating app or site?

Respondents were asked what are some of the reasons for using more than one dating app or site? From 225 that responded, common responses that occurred were because it gave users more options to find match with different people across different platforms and offering more opportunity to get a match and potential dates. Other reasons were that it users were becoming board over one app or service so went onto another.

Q8 Have you ever paid for any the premium features. Please tick any that applies.

Respondents were asked from any of the dating apps or services used have they paid for any of the listed features. While 79% of the respondents said no.

Q10 Would you be more likely to meet a date if the dating app or site incentives were promotional exclusive offers (like two for one coffee, two for one cocktail, game for two bowling etc)?

Over 50% said they would be more likely to meet someone if incentives were involved while 24% were indecisive and less than 20% were less incline to more likely to meet if incentives were available.

Survey Findings

The results from the survey show that the majority of users are using an online dating service or app to seek a relationship. Whilst the majority of respondents did not pay for premium features, more than half said they had used more than one dating service or app. The reasons for this were that it offered users more variety in meeting different people, increased chances of matching and dating and therefore decreased boredom when using the service or app.

This suggests that current dating apps as they are have limitations in providing a positive user experience. The suggestion to include in a dating app opportunities for physical meetings was met with positivity and could help towards increasing users overall dating experience.

Interview participants

Interviews were carried out to gain qualitative data and further insight into user behaviour on existing dating apps. The interview consisted of 3 independent participants relating to user experience and views in dating. Below shows the questions asked and the participants responses. Please refer to appendix 'Interview transcript results' for information.

Transcript in Microsoft folder.

Q1 – What dating apps or online dating services have you or currently use?

Participant 1 said they use Plenty of fish, Tinder, and bumble. Participant 2 said they are using tinder now and previously used Hinge. Participant 3 said they have used Tinder, Bumble and Plenty of fish. All three participants have used similar dating apps and so this can help explore and pick out any similarities or differences between the apps.

Q2 – Is there any reason for using more than one and if any were better for you from one over another?

Participant 1 spoke about how it depends on the people that are on it, saying Tinder was at the bottom of the list and that they felt that Tinder is for the younger audience or people who are single and looking for fun. Whereas Bumble was a better experience as once matched, the woman messages first and therefore felt there was a better connection from it.

Participant 2 said they particularly liked Tinder compared to the others used like Bumble, as the simple swiping right feature means less effort needs to go into looking and matching.

Participant 3 said they used more than one dating app to trial what one they preferred. They felt they had a nicer experience on Bumble in comparison to Tinder, as Bumble felt more genuine in its matches and Tinder was more relating to hook-ups. The participants said on Tinder they get a lot more messages but not what they were looking for, whereas Bumble, the woman messages first which was nicer and resulted in having more control.

Q3 – With dating apps or services used, did you pay for any paid features, if so why?

Participant 1 said no they did not pay for any premium service as didn't feel it was worth it and could get most of what they needed from the free service. Participant 2 said they had paid for a particular feature to see who liked them to then know to match or not. Participant 3 said they had paid for a premium service to try it out to see whether it was worth paying for.

Q4 – If yes, comparing the paid features to the free service features, did you find any that were beneficial to you during your user experience to dating?

Although Participant 1 previously said they did not pay for any paid service, they did find Tinder's free service restrictive due to having limited daily swipes, which is partly why they used other dating apps at the same time. Participant 2 found that paying for a premium service was much better than the free service and to get what they wanted out of it, they must pay extra.

Participant 3 said the main benefit to the paid service compared to the free service was time saved. The paid service gave more options to filter people, whereas with the free service you are shown everyone in the set distance area and therefore spend a lot of time swiping and checking profiles. Participant 3 however said that it wasn't any more successful paying for the service, as in gaining matches and dates, it just reduced time spent on it.

Q5 – From a user experience point of view, how did/do you find the online dating experience process leading to the dating experience?

Participant 1 said they felt apps like Bumble was a better experience as the effort you put in, you get back in kind but that it still, as with other apps, felt generic i.e. a person's bio saying they like the gym, they like going to the beach and so on. Participant 2 said the experience is not going to be the same as meeting someone face to face.

Participant 3 said their overall view of the user experience process to the dating experience was to how genuine people were to their profile, explaining *"you match because you both swipe whatever way it is, that's how you match. So it's basically someone looks for your profile when liked, what they've seen, you've looked at theirs and liked what you've seen but I don't think it necessarily means that in person you're gonna be a match."*

Q6 – Do you feel a physical dating experience is more than an online dating experience?

Participant 1 said the physical experience is most important when it comes to dating, as it feels easier to speak to them in person than to online and thinks that's where dating apps have their limitations as it doesn't reflect from an individual profile.

Participant 2 said the physical dating experience is really important as that is where you know whether you have chemistry with somebody and you can't feel that through a dating app.

Participant 3 also agrees that it is really difficult to tell much about a person or pick up their personality or nuances through messaging and a profile is only a snapshot of themselves, whilst also messaging can be difficult to gain enough as people perceive messages differently in how they are written.

Q7 – During using any dating apps or online services did you find any barriers or frustrations as a user when using the dating apps or services?

Participant 1 felt that dating apps are now formed around picture aspect that is tailored towards a certain generation and unless you are photogenic it can be a barrier, whilst they mentioned in term of matching, the matching did meet what he was looking for as it was far too generic, and you be swiping on people who are attractive and, in the area, but have nothing in common.

Participant 2 said the only problem they had was that the swiping process became quite addictive.

Participant 3 expressed not having enough filters to help find what they were looking for as it then became very time consuming.

Q8 – Is there anything you think that could be improved or introduced within the dating apps to help improve user experience for overall dating experience?

Participant 1 said introducing different groups such as professionals or things of interest could help improve the user experience, explaining:

“there could be various different rooms or groups which would give you a grouping of people which you could look through that might be a good idea. So you could have like professionals or football, whatever your interests are, but these are groups with these people. So then instead of just swiping a big swarm of people, you can actually tailor things which you identify with, and they identify with.”

Participant 2 spoke about improving the security of user’s safety of who they are talking to as they said a problem that occurs is users being ‘catfished’:

“I think that's probably something that a lot of people struggle with because people pretend to be people that they're not. So yeah, I guess that would be helpful with. You knew that who you were talking to really is who you were talking to, and I just think when you're using an app, you're never gonna have that connection cause you until you meet someone you just you physically can't.”

Participant 3 spoke of having more filters in the free service which would help users more with matching with their preference and reduce time spent searching on the apps, as explained:

“In a free service, more filters so that you can filter down things like because they allow you to choose a filter of what? Smoking or non-smoking but they don't allow other filters like

height. You could put your interests, but you can't filter down about someone else's interests as far as I'm aware, I don't know what it's like now. So yeah, more filters so that it's less time consuming and better matches."

Interview Findings

The findings show that that 3 participants used a variety of different dating apps at any one time; citing reasons for this being to test them out and to seek more matches. The preference of dating app seem to be down to either simplicity of usage or experience.

Participants one and two preferred the use of Bumble as it offered a better connection to other users, that users were more genuine and that the majority of users were looking for a relationship. Whereas Tinder, according to participant two, had more users looking for less commitment and are perhaps drawn into the simplicity of the app.

2 participants had paid to upgrade to a premium service, with one finding it helpful and the other not any more successful but was less time consuming due to more filter options.

All 3 participants felt that the online dating experience is taking each person at face value and that you can't tell in this way if you'll be a good match or not.

All 3 participants preferred physical dating rather than online dating with reasons for this being that you get to know the real person, can gauge whether you have chemistry and that conversation is easier.

Looking at barriers to the online experience, participant one felt looks was a barrier because that is the first things that one decides on. Another participant felt that too little filters was a barrier because it became time consuming and therefore off putting.

Improvements for dating apps which were suggested are improving security to limit dishonest users, adding more filters to the free service to reduce time spent on the app and adding filters to refine interests to tailor your searches more.

The findings also seem to suggest that whilst the process of the dating apps works in the same way, namely swiping, matching and messaging, each app has a certain connotation as to what it is used for i.e. hook-ups, looking to date. In hindsight, a question asking what the users intention was when using dating app could have been useful in confirming this.

It appears that a user's experience of a dating app can differ depending on what the individual is looking for. If the user's intention is looking for hook-ups, then a free service suits that, whereas a user looking for something more serious, paying for extra enables a more tailored search and control of their matches.

It also appears that the restrictions of the free service to tailor searches creates frustration for users.

CONCLUSION

From the survey and interviews, expresses the barrier of spending too much time on the dating apps than meeting and moving onto another dating app to repeat the same process find someone, because of restrictions of filters and other matching prospects a physical dating experience can't be grasped through online and prefer the physical experience. Suggesting that user experience could be further improved around tailoring more for filters to those who are looking for something more serious or genuine, While also understanding key importance of physical interaction will ultimately make a dating experience.

This could lead to how the development of the prototype could be formed tailoring value to users whilst keeping in mind business values and objectives, but in addition could offer other value to where these two can meet and look to explore ways to make a dating app close to a physical experience which links to a user experience and answering the research question how user experience design can influence a user dating experience through mobile dating apps.

Introduction to project

For this research project the deliverance of the artefact would be created through a simulation of a prototype. The tailoring concept of artefact has help to form the primary and secondary research carried out on people and their experience using dating apps and the dating industry.

As previous research conducted earlier, the findings showed that people were experience user fatigue with dating apps and their experience around it. With many users had said they have used more than one dating app at a time across 12 months and many users who has never met up with anyone from a dating app in which these signs could suggest users were experience user fatigue. In addition, with some dating apps appearing to gamify the dating experience with strict limitations on the free service and algorithms of paying members to be seen first and more frequent hampers free users on limitations and paying users at a cost.

As the primary research conducted revealed further understanding into dating app limitations leading to user frustration. From the interviews, participants expressed using a free service of common dating barriers they faced were in limited swipes and restriction of filters to finding a match. Participants also expressed the management of their online dating experience in the repetition of managing their dating profile, matching, and messaging becomes a timely process resulting in more time using a dating app than meeting a date in person leading to giving them prolong bad user experience.

It is considered that many of these factors may have contributed to users' experiencing bad user experience in different ways and led to some reasoning of dating fatigue from users in online dating, as the studies continued to show that users felt face to face interaction offers a better and fulfilling dating experience and online interaction is more difficult to gauge or build connections with someone, therefore makes it challenging to give users a fulfilled experience through a digital element.

This there leads to how to design a solution to support users having a fulfilling dating experience. From the primary and secondary research gathered these will help to lead the study in how user experience could be enhanced though an introduction of an artefact (feature) towards dating apps. This process would focus on a user's needs and develop a design solution that would help aid positive experience for a user and aim to maintain a level of fulfilment within using a dating app and meet the aims of the research project enhancing a user's experience in a dating app for a better dating experience.

Methodology/Process

As a process of this design project to run smoothly, it will be undertaken in the form of a project management application. This is to help break down and construct the design project into practical phases to help achieve to overall objective goal of the research project. Project management is the application taken for process, methods, skills, strategies to achieve specific project objectives aligning to meet the overall project goal (Apm, 2021).

A methodology is '*a set of methods used towards a particular area of study or activity*' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022). In project management it is used as a system implemented into practical procedures to work aiding the objective goal. There are several methods that can be used for to manage a project, some of more commonly used project management methods are Agile, Scrum, Kanban, Waterfall and Prince2 (Aston, 2021). Different managing methods would be more suitable or beneficial over other project management methods depending on the type of project at hand and/or the overall aims is to achieve.

The carrying out of the rest of this research project it will be using an Agile methodology approach. An Agile methodology in project management is a managing process breaks a project down into several phases with continuous evaluation and stakeholder involvement at every milestone, assessing for any amendments or improvements for an effective process (Wrike, 2022). The benefit of implement an Agile approach to this project is it will allow to keep a robust and controlled process ensuring with regular checks an evaluation helps to identify and minimize the number of problems occurring, resulting for this project to run more effectively.

Other methodologies were considered for the project such as a Waterfall methodology framework. A Waterfall methodology uses a linear process in project management, it begins with the aims of a project that then cascades down into several other phases. Waterfall's process would generally not move onto the follow phases within a project until the previous phase is completed. This offers stability for a project as it flows through the timeline of the project (L Hoory, 2022).

Evaluating using an Agile framework to a Waterfall framework, an Agile framework offers flexibility through and between the process of the project and ability to evaluate and adjust within the project timeline. A Waterfall framework offers a stable framework as it remains its' focus on the current task until completion before moving forward, however with its' rigorous framework with fixed timelines this could be problematic if problems occur in any of the phases like the implementation phases such as poor designing (L Hoory, 2022). Therefore, this gives the reason for choosing an Agile project management framework.

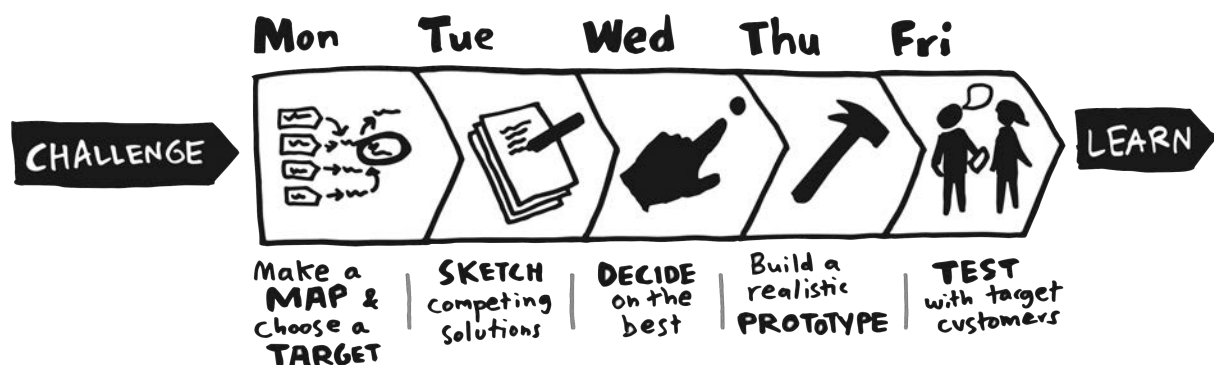
Design Thinking Process

Design thinking is a non-linear, integrative process that is used by teams to gain user understanding, challenge assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions to prototype and test (Interaction design Foundation, 2022). The design thinking process consist of five transitioning phases of emphasise, define, ideate, prototype and test.

The design thinking process begins with the first phase of emphasising with the user's problem and understanding the user's needs. Emphasising to the user is key factor to the user centre process. The second phase 'define', is the collective information gathered during the first phase of 'empathise', which allows you to analyse your observations and identify core problems to the user. It then allows you to build customer persona that aid the team how to work to their solution. Phase 3 leads to the ideation that is created from the understanding of the core problem and target customer, which involves creating different innovative solution ideas. This leads into phase 4 of prototyping, that aims to identify the best solution to the problem. The final phase of the design thinking process is the testing of the solutions which promotes to further results and opportunity to improve on the design solution in the future (Interaction Design Foundation, 2022).

Design Sprint

One of the processes tools to use for the design thinking process is a Design Sprint. A design sprint is timed activity containing of different design team members working together to a solution of a design problem of a product or service which follows the principles and structure of a design thinking process. A Design Sprint runs across over five days compacting of going through different phases involving mapping, sketching, decision, prototyping and testing where reaching the achieved goal(Miro, 2022).



(Sprint, 2022)

Naturally a Design Sprint would consist of a group of team members working together on a design project and concentrated over a period of five days. As a consideration of this design sprint will partake through the structure or research and is basis of this research is of an individual study. The design sprint will be managed and worked through to a different rate of traditional sprints. The design sprint process will extend accordingly factoring elements of the academic study and working on an individual basis, the agile project managing framework will help with the flexibility of the sprint. The overall design sprint will estimate a length of approximately 30 days, which will be shown in the project Gantt chart below.

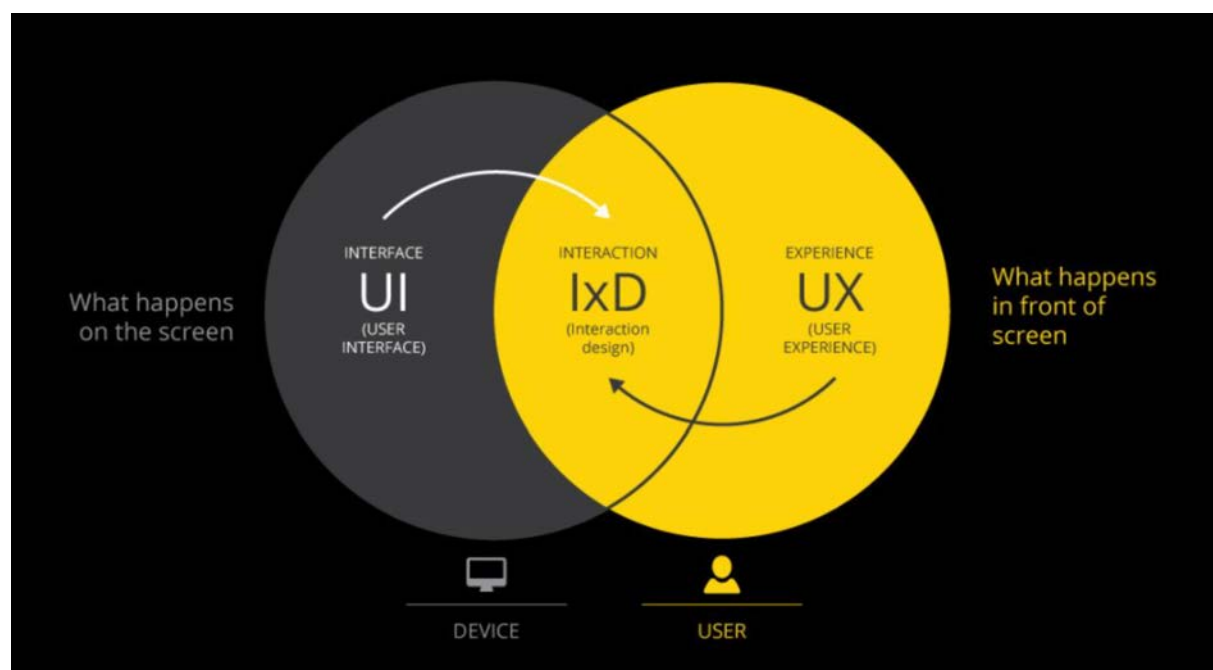
Design approach

Through the development of the design sprint, each design solution will look at the different design approach that will help towards the design challenge. The design approaches that will be used in the implementation of the design would be a user centred design and a task centred design. User centred design is a user-driven process that puts a user at the centre of a design and development. It looks focuses on the users' needs, emphasising to their wants in that environment. A design would lead to develop or be refined from the user centred evaluation (Usability.gov, 2022). A tasked centred design stems from a variation of user centred designs from looking at user's tasks within a design to achieve their end goal (Greenberg, 2022). As the research project aim is to a design solution to enhancing a user's experience through a dating app therefore a user centred design would be the focus, however, a task centred design would also be taken into considerations to other designs.

UX/ID/UI Design

Through the design sprint and design thinking process as a designer will go through the thinking process of how a design solution will meet the needs of a user to reach their end goal. A designer will look at how and what design elements will help these needs to be met by implementing critical thinking into the design and research. These skills of thinking are designs of user experience (UX), interaction design (IxD) and user interface (UI).

User experience (UX) is how a user interacts and behaves with a product or service and the experience they get out of it in reaching their end goal (Interaction-design.org, 2022). It looks at process of usability functions and what experience that will give to the user. User Interface (UI) is the point of interaction between a user and digital device or product. It is the aesthetic of a user's experience with a product or service where it focuses on how a user's experience would visually look. User interface plays an important role also as giving a more visually pleasing experience is perceived more usable by a user (Moran, 2017).



(Qualtrics, 2022)

Interaction design (IxD) is the designing interaction between users and products. Its' goal is to create products that allow users to achieve their end goal more efficiently, maximizing their user experience in a product or service. (IxD) works as the subgroup between the two of UX design and UI Design, where (UI) focuses on visual design and (UX) looks at the outcome of the experience, (IxD) considers both to create a meaningful experience.

In the design sprint the use of UX and UI design is implemented during different phases of the sprint. During the early stage of the sprint around phase 2 is where user experience design takes part as these phases identifies users' needs and begin design paths to meet those needs. UI design comes across in phase 4 of designing the visual layout of the design paths making it accessible and easy for the user to reach their goal. The interaction design blends between the phases 2 and 4 aligning interaction with the design paths of the user experience and the visual layout of the user interface.

Front end design

As previously explained through the Design Sprint, developing a prototype can be produced more efficiently and offer same data response, choosing a front end design software was the next step. There are two formerly known software that I have considered for this project which is Figma and Adobe XD.

[Figma](#) is a collaborative web-based application design tool for interface design. It is a UX and UI design tool that allows a whole team to collaboratively interact and work together on designs simultaneously anywhere in the world at one time (Bracey, 2018).

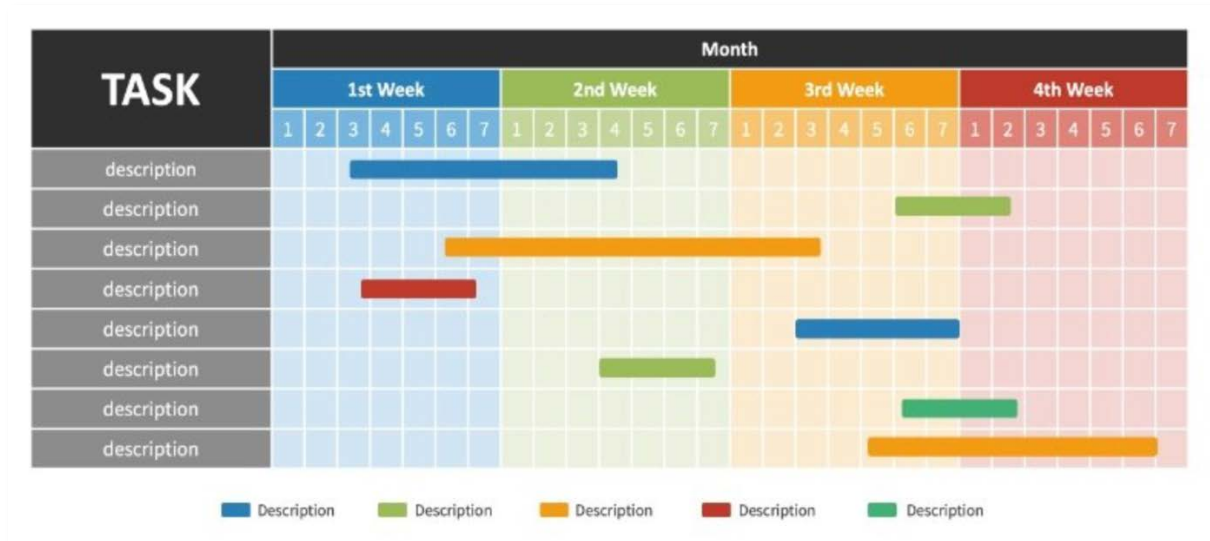
[Adobe XD](#) is a vector-based UX, UI experience design tool for web and mobile applications that allows designers to build interactive design prototypes to bring better experience to websites and mobile applications (Purdila, 2021).

In comparing the two design software, both offer great experience towards building wireframes, designing visual layouts and interactive animations to give the illusion of a real website or mobile application. Figma is said to operate faster in online cloud storage as the software is functions online and its strength is its' real-time collaboration framework to users working on the same project on different platforms at the same time. Adobe syncs from Adobe's Creative Cloud and works well together with other Adobe software like illustrator and Photoshop allowing creators to be more creative (Coursera, 2022).

The main aspect that separates the two is pricing to access the software. Figma offers a free starter version to a max of 3 Figma projects then \$12 per editor per month (Figma, 2022). Adobe offers a 7 day free trial then is £9.98 per month (Adobe , 2022). Both also offer free access to users in academic studies. From comparing both software, for this project I will be using Figma as it offers works more efficiently to the server and it is also personal preference to choosing Figma as having more familiarity of using this software to design prototypes than with Adobe XD.

Project Planning

To support the process and planning of a managing project, a common and useful tool used is a Gantt chart. A Gantt chart is bar chart visually laid out to display a project timeline from beginning to end (R Alday, 2015). In Project Management a Gantt chart helps to provide an overview of the project and milestones, plan & schedule projects and tasks, visualise tasks overtime and team involvement help plan, such as design sprints. Using a Gantt chart to work alongside the project management of a project can help to the process to work and adjust accordingly or review within the Agile framework (Project Manager, 2022).



(Childress, 2022)

Other project planning tools were considered such as Trello to oversee the planning and management of this project. Trello is a visual application tool that enables a team to manage any type of project, workflow, or task tracking (Trello, 2022). Trello works well with a Kanban project management methodology as it works as its framework focus on smaller tasks to more specific details how to manage a project. Where comparing to Agile offers general guidelines over stages of the project (Wrike, 2021). Which comes to the decision to use a Gantt chart instead of Trello.

As previously explained that a design sprint would consist of team of people and would be actioned over a period 1-2 weeks depending on the project at hand. As this design sprint is being delivered by one person and compiling with academic studies, the design sprint will oversee of a period of approximately 30days. The Gantt chart will show of the overview timeline of the project, each phase of the design sprint and evaluation at each milestone. To view Gantt Chart for the design sprint, please see appendix*****

The Design Sprint

The aim of this design sprint is to discover and create a design solution that aligns to the research question **‘How can user experience design influence user dating experience through mobile dating apps?’**. This sprint will allow to explore and anticipate a design gap, which would in aid provide contributing solution to enhance a users’ experience within the online dating apps which will result in helping to give an overall better dating experience in face to face dating environment.

The Challenge

The challenge here to solve is what could help to enhance a users’ experience when using a dating app?

Goal and Sprint Questions

In this sprint the **Goal** is defined how the design outcome would meet the users’ needs.

To give users an experience of fulfilment from use of the integrated design features of a dating app when matching and meeting new people giving a better dating experience.

The **Sprint Question(s)** I want to answer in the prototype are:

- ***Can we create a program that allows users to have an integrated dating experience between online and offline dating platforms?***
- ***Can we guide users in how to get support on their dating experience?***
- ***Can we reward or show progress in how dating could be supported to help others?***

Design Sprint Outcome

The outcome of this design sprint will help to understand the level of the user’s needs that will help give a better user experience, fulfilling to making a better dating experience. The outcome will determine if there remains a gap for opportunity to enhance a user’s experience in existing dating apps.

The outcome will also determine an indication if a design as this that requires less app engagement but maintain same level of user satisfaction would hold to offer users better overall user experience for a longer duration and less dating fatigue experience. When there then offers further development in any future designs across a dating app.

Phase 1 – Mapping

Phase 1 is the beginning structure of the Design Sprint, it looks over at end of a problem and agree on a long term goal, following simple mapping of the product or service where further understanding of the problem (Knapp, 2022). This allows gives further insight analysis to identify any greater risks and/or opportunities towards meeting the long-term goal and problem solution.

User Goal

A user goal is described as the end state that a user wants to reach. They are focused on real-world end action points where it explores the journey of a user to achieving their goal (Yale University, 2022). A process used to understand a user end goal would be mapping a user journey, which is done visually for visual aid. A user journey is mapping out the path(s) a user may take to reach their end goal in a particular website or app (Experience UX, 2022). They are insights to further understand how they use website or app and allows you to identify how to enable the user to achieve their goal more effectively and efficiently.

The user journey path below shows the simple steps a user goes through within a dating app to reach their end goal (this display is showing Tinder dating app) The user starts by opening an account on their choice of dating app, which then leads them to begin start swiping other users who they like, which then leads them to the next stage of matching with other users who had also liked them and that follows to begin bonding in messaging. If successful with swiping, matching, and bonding with another user, the user has reached their end goal of using the app. If not, they revert back to the swiping stage and repeat the path journey again.



(User pilot, 2022)

It is important to understand the end goal of the user before implementing any design or development begins as this helps to gather insight to how to meet the users' needs and

steps to reaching their end goal. Not understanding the user before may lead to the wrong product being designed and not meeting the users end goal they wanted to achieve

User Insight Recap

From the secondary research conducted previously, it was understood that users were feeling a sense of dating fatigue (YouthSight, 2021). Many users who still prefer traditional dating methods of meeting someone in person as its felt that online dating doesn't create an effective dating experience for them. And while dating has become increasingly popular in recent years, there remain many users who still haven't met up with anyone (Mintel, 2019).

Following the primary research conducted, responses from the survey showed a desire for meeting in person dating experience and making a date more incentive with things to do would encourage users to meet or more incline to use a paid dating service. Following the responses of the conducted interviews, the interviewees expressed that online dating can be convenient to match & message but agree traditional dating of meeting in person is better as it offers to create better connections and understanding with the other person. It was also expressed that whilst online dating can offer some conveniences there were some limitations in looking for specific criteria: such as having filters for height, smoker/non-smoker, or types of hobbies but no filters or group section to search others in same profession as teachers as they said they quite like to others they can relate to.

'How Might We' notes (HMWs)

'How might we' notes are a design thinking exercise which involves the design team rephrasing design challenges into questions with the start the question beginning with 'How might we?' (Knapp, 2016). The exercise is practiced at the early stage of a design sprint. It follows from identifying any initial insight or pain points that relates to design challenge (Keller, 2019). Below are some 'How might we' notes asked in help lead and develop the target area:

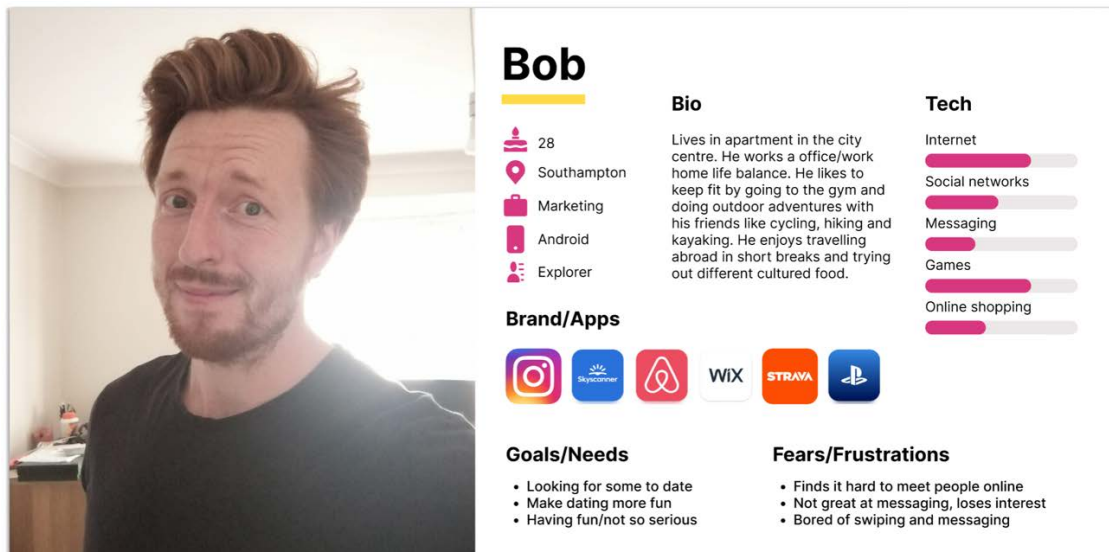


Selecting a Target Area

The final task of phase one is selecting a target area of the user journey to focus for the design sprint challenge. The target area is built up from the knowledge of the user journey path, customer insight or research and the 'how might we' task helping to narrow down a target area (AJ&Smart, 2019). Once identifying the target area, this would be the focus throughout the rest of the design sprint challenge.

Selecting Target Customer

Selecting a target customer will help identify and build solution towards designs. A useful tool used to help build the selected target customer is a customer persona. A user persona is visual profile based of a target customer formulated from research specifics. A customer persona helps businesses of further insight understanding on the type of audience and potential ways to how best to reach and connect with the selected target audience (Wix, 2021). For design thinking, creating a persona would help to see the problem from a customers' perspective, giving better understanding towards how to develop solutions and maintain on path to a user centred design approach.



Bob

Bio

- 28
- Southampton
- Marketing
- Android
- Explorer

Tech

- Internet
- Social networks
- Messaging
- Games
- Online shopping

Brand/Apps

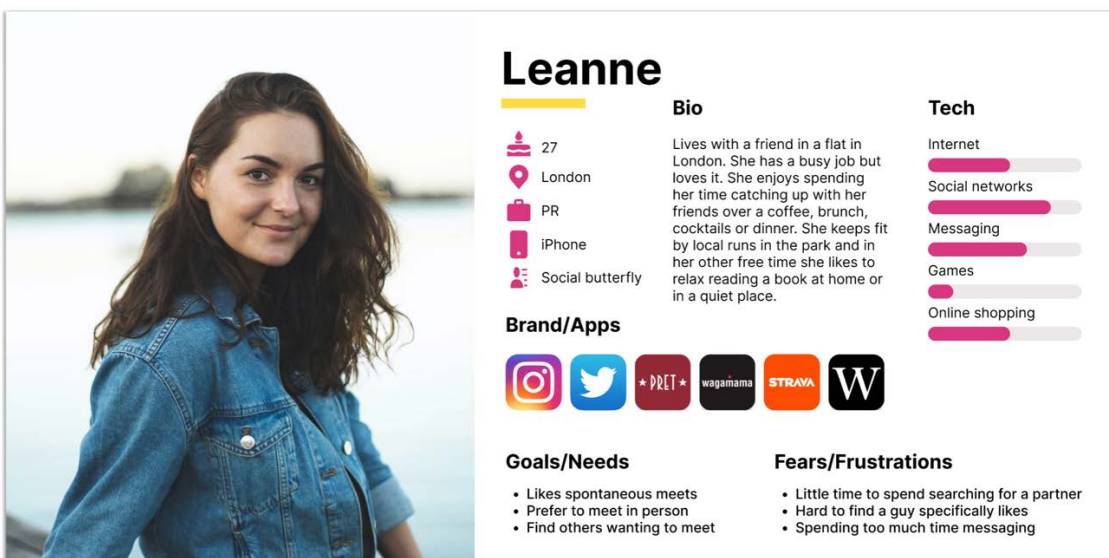
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Spotify
- Wix
- Strava
- PlayStation

Goals/Needs

- Looking for some to date
- Make dating more fun
- Having fun/not so serious

Fears/Frustrations

- Finds it hard to meet people online
- Not great at messaging, loses interest
- Bored of swiping and messaging



Leanne

Bio

- 27
- London
- PR
- iPhone
- Social butterfly

Tech

- Internet
- Social networks
- Messaging
- Games
- Online shopping

Brand/Apps

- Instagram
- Twitter
- Pret
- Wagamama
- Strava
- W

Goals/Needs

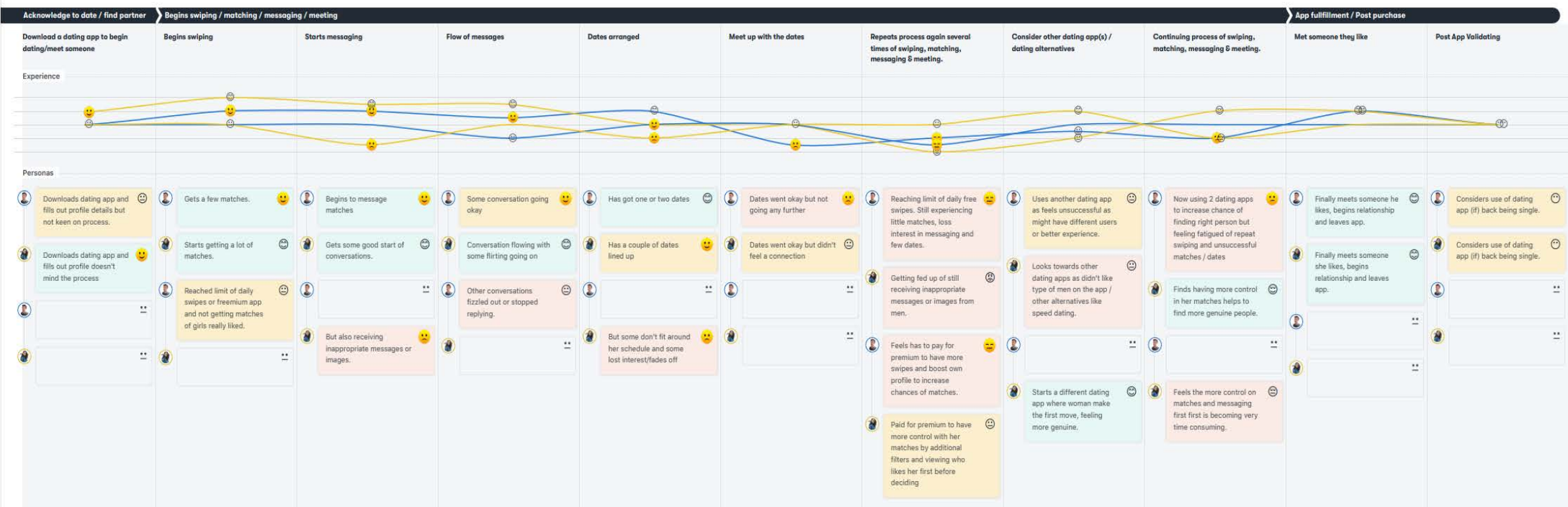
- Likes spontaneous meets
- Prefer to meet in person
- Find others wanting to meet

Fears/Frustrations

- Little time to spend searching for a partner
- Hard to find a guy specifically likes
- Spending too much time messaging

Then brief talk then this part - The personas were developed through a range of customer data and user research using sources from conductive research. Below shows both user personas path and their steps going through the user journey reaching the end goal of a dating app. The user journey would consider the goals/needs and fears/frustrations of each user to help give a more accurate user journey.

The user journey also shows a linear path of the emotions of the users and the experience they encountered during the journey, showing comments below of the received experience aligning to the linear path of what the users were feeling at that point of time between both the personas created. Showing green comments as positive, beige comments as not great but not bad experience and red comments as bad experience. To identify the path of each user's journey below, Bob's path displayed in blue, and Leanne's path is displayed in yellow with their profile and comment of experience aligned to the feeling.



The users journey shows the steps and experiences of Bob's and Leanne's path of a dating app from acknowledgement to date to fulfilment of meeting someone. It displays a linear graph across each stage and interaction of the journey and details of each of their experiences that aligns with linear graph movement.

Bob's pain points appear to be around limitation on swiping, matching, and achieving to move from messaging to a meet/date and the fatigued feeling of the repetition of a dating app's nature: swipe, match, message, and little success.

Reaching a limit of daily swipes is overuse of the app swipe function, not getting matches with other users can be down to how a user profile is setup and therefore isn't catching attention to other users they wish. Loss out online conversation interaction can be down to several potential factors where the other user perhaps no longer finds them interesting, the other user is pursuing another conversation with someone else they find is flowing or each other's perception of personality is perceived differently within the conversation and puts a conversation at a loss.

Leanne's encountered bad experience appeared to be on the recipient end of receiving messages and pictures of inappropriate nature and not getting meaningful connections with some of the users as wished or in person and becoming time consuming with the more control of an app managing who she matches and messages first.

Unfortunately this is part of the sad nature of online dating/dating apps, women receiving inappropriate messages/images. Users reporting such behaviour enforces bans but doesn't remove the problem. As previous primary research carried out showed, people truly get the best and realistic experience from physical face to face interaction and ability to form a closer connection.

While online dating/dating apps is offered as a steppingstone to help users find matches and potential meet ups, it doesn't guarantee a user of meeting another person. Controlling who to match with and starting opening conversation can take time especially if wanting to catch their attention than just saying 'hey' that can risk little response back. And by if repeating this behaviour becomes tiresome it then numbs the effect the dating app is meant to give and therefore result in slow poor user experience.

From evaluating the user journey of Bob and Leanna. There are signified indicators of pain points where the users were not having a good experience during their journey with a dating app. While Bob's and Leanne's bad experience differ from one another, the experience of pain point occurred during similar steps of the user journey. The similarities of pain points appear to show between finding matches, messaging, and meeting dates suggesting this as an area of focus.

Agile phase 1 Summary

The 'How might we' has helped to view challenges from a different prospect and bring in new challenges that didn't think off, helping to further shape and understand a user's path in a dating app leading to better characterise towards the user personas. Development of the two user journeys has helped to build the steps of the user journey path, it was also beneficial creating two personas of a male and female as it has helped to give insight of pain points from different gender perspective and experiences. Showing of similarities where users are receiving or experience a bad experience has allowed to identify an area of focus and anticipate the next move into phase 2 of the design sprint.

Area of Focus

The area of focus that has been identified from the user journey and will carry out for the rest of the design sprint is the area between finding matches, messaging, and meeting dates as this is where the most interaction happens with users and a dating app. By focusing on this area could help reduce bad user experience occurring and/or give user's a more positive experience and work align to the design sprint objectives to ***'give users an experience of fulfilment from use of the integrated design features of a dating app when matching and meeting new people giving a better dating experience'***

Phase 2 – Sketching

Phase 2 moves into looking at solving the problem, where the team individually look at the problem and sketch out their strategic thinking and critical process planning to the solution in that product or service. This is done instead of a typical group brainstorming, as it then negates any of the biased thinking to a solution (Knapp, 2022).

The phase begins with the team exploring other products or services for inspiring solutions that will help towards the design challenge. Knapp explains it is good to consider branching out to explore design solutions outside the current industry or field as this can help the team to discover new ideas or different viewpoints that they may not have considered before, bringing different solutions together for better improvements. (Knapp, 2016).

For this design sprint I have looked at four existing dating apps in the online dating industry and explored into two other apps relating to traveling and outdoor adventures to spark any influential ideas to the challenge. This would follow in evaluating the four selected dating apps upon a comparison analysis and exploring aspects of the other two apps that may offer some design solutions towards the user journey and the design sprint challenge.

The Dating Apps

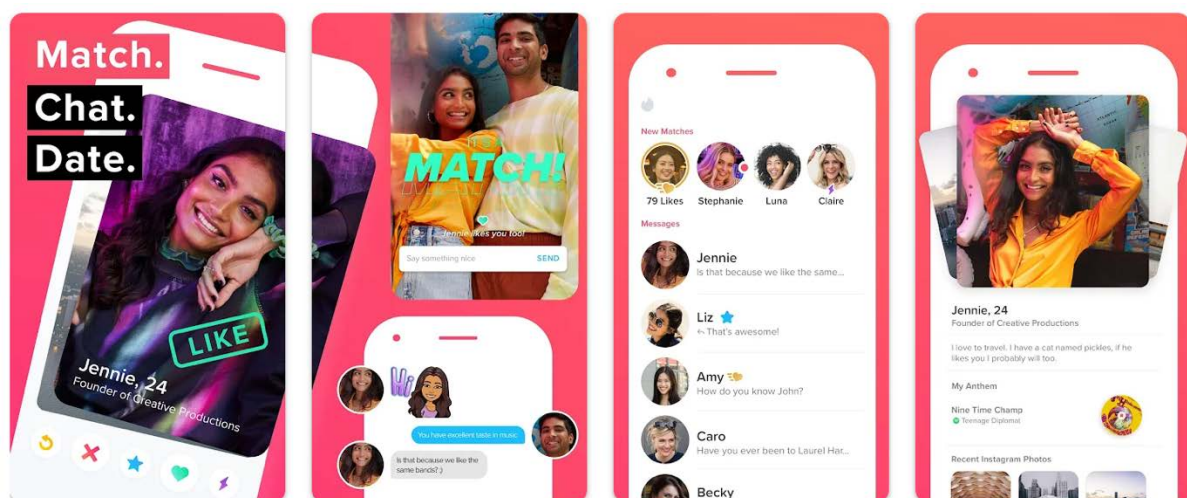
The following for dating apps selected are Tinder, Bumble, Hinge and Thursday.

Tinder

Tinder - Dating app. Meet. Chat



[Tinder](#) is an online dating app that allows single people to match in their local area and around the world virtually. Tinder is famously known for its simple swipe and match feature, where a user goes through other profiles in their local area and can either swipe left or right for the ones they dislike (left) or like (right) and if the other user also swipes right to like them then it's a match and then the two can begin talking. (Business Insider, 2021).



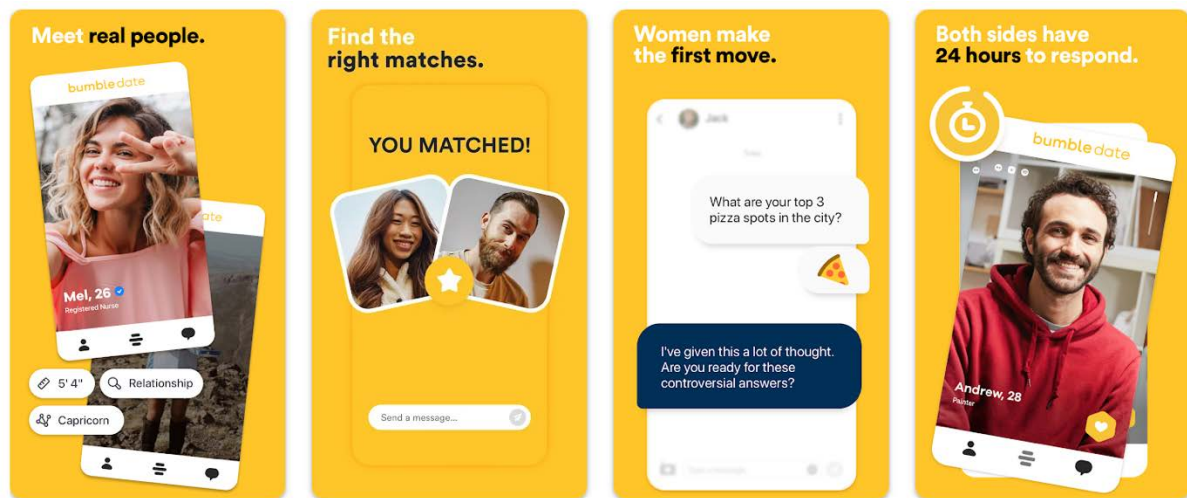
(Google Play, 2022)

Bumble



Bumble - Dating. Friends. Bizz

[Bumble](#), is another online dating app with local matching and simple swipe with those in a person's local area, however, when there is a match, the woman is required to make the first move. This is to encourage equality and giving female empowerment in the dating scene (Bumble, 2022).



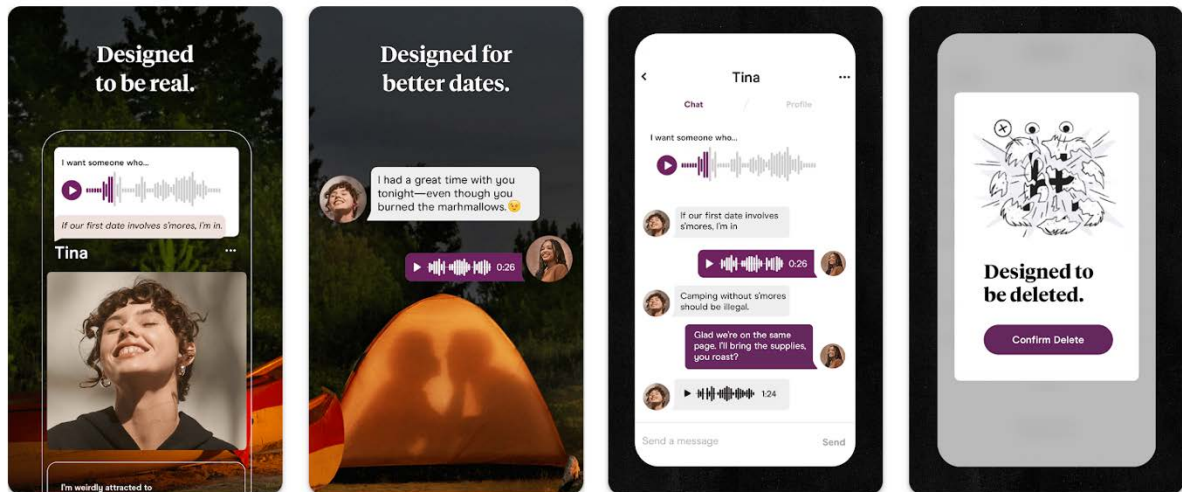
(Google Play, 2022)

Hinge



Hinge – Dating & Relationships

[Hinge](#) the dating app designed to be deleted. Hinge follows the same swipe and match feature as the other co dating apps. Hinge doesn't fully focus on the credentials of input filters to find people in local are as Tinder or Bumble, Hinge aims to focus on behavioural algorithms which there allows to help build up better compatibility matching for the user making in theory their tagline the dating app designed to be deleted (Hinge, 2022).



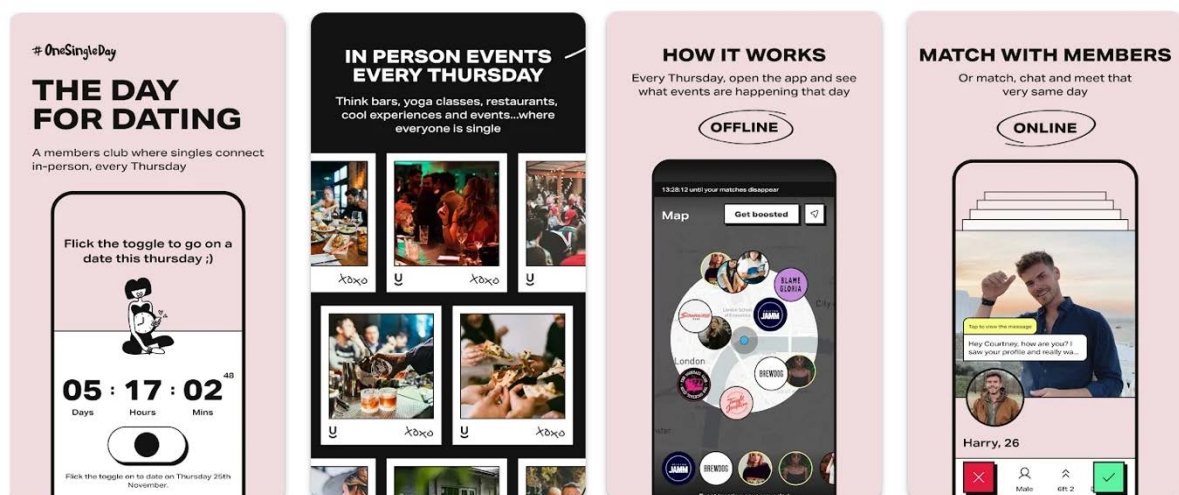
(Google Play, 2022)

Thursday

Thursday – The day for dating



[Thursday](#) is a revelatory a new concept to the dating industry, unlike the other three dating apps that operate on a daily prospect of a user swiping until they make a match and begin messaging. Thursday becomes active to users only one day every week (being Thursday), and the app goal is users meet in person rather than same process of other dates in swiping, matching, and meeting. Thursday encourages users to meet by attended organised events and activities such as a boat party, drink night as at private venues for Thursday and activities like team softball, yoga and west end theatre (Thursday, 2022).



(Google Play, 2022)

Other Apps

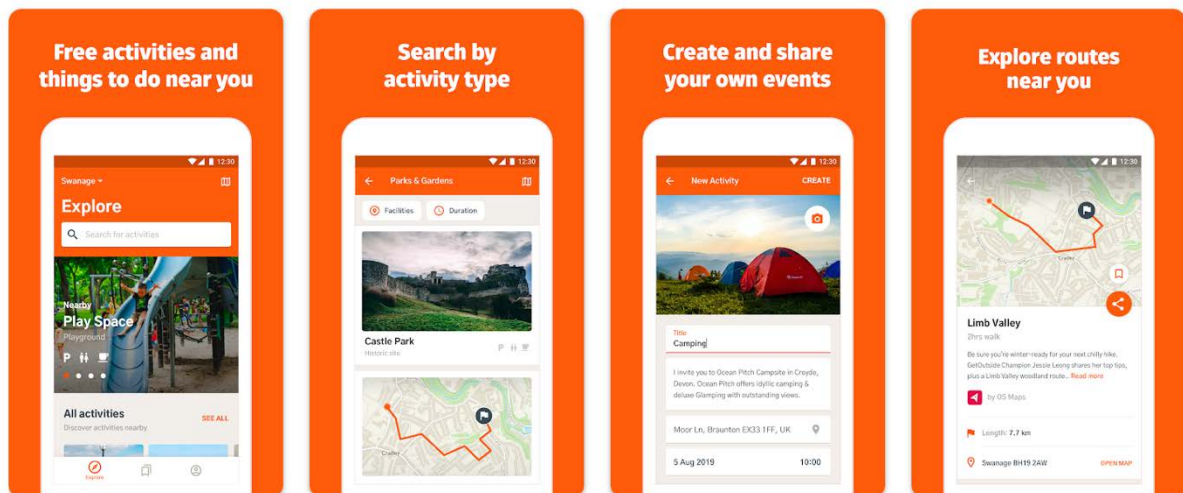
The other apps that were explored were from outside the dating industry. This is to help explore alternative design solutions and concepts that other apps do to give a positive experience for users. From exploring other industries the two selected was Ordnance Survey under the public sector and Hostelworld that is in the travel industry.

Ordnance Survey Ltd

GetOutside – Local things to do



[Ordnance Survey](#) is a national mapping agency for Great Britain, originating from Military purpose of mapping Scotland following rebellion in 1745. To date Ordnance Survey is a geographical information (GI) powerhouse of big data, holding a database surveyed of 243,241 square kilometres of Great Britain containing collected geographic features of location of people, buildings and postcodes and flood risk areas (Ordnance Survey, 2022).



(Google Play, 2022)

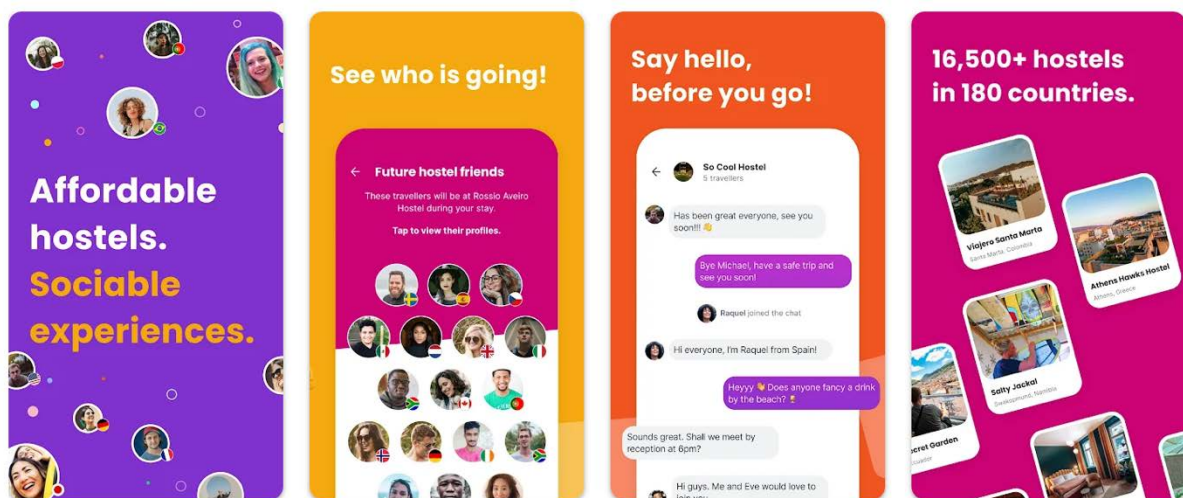
One of Ordnance Survey belief an active outdoor lifestyle is to encourage people of Great Britain to get out and explore and make the most outdoors with the help of the Get apps outdoors. Exploring the ideas of activities to partake and other compensating features like mapping could help create design solutions to the target area.

Hostelworld

Hostelworld – Local things to do



[Hostelworld](#) is an online global travel agent booking platform on hostels around the world. Providing affordable accommodation in unique hostels. Their target audience are young backpacker who seek a travel adventure. With availability of hostels in over 180 countries their focus is to provide their travellers a unique experience and memorable experiences. With their website and app available in 19 different languages making it accessible to many travellers (Hostelworld, 2022).



(Google Play, 2022)

Humans are social species that are hard wired to social connections and relationships. We are most comfortable when connected among one another or groups in communicating, sharing emotions and physical interaction (Morgan, 2015). Social behaviour is vital part of humans as it allows people to come together and can motivate people to do things that may not normally do themselves (Sukal, 2019). This can be where Hostelworld utilizes online interaction among users allowing them to socially interact with others going to the same hostel, which could often give the user a more fulfilled user experience.

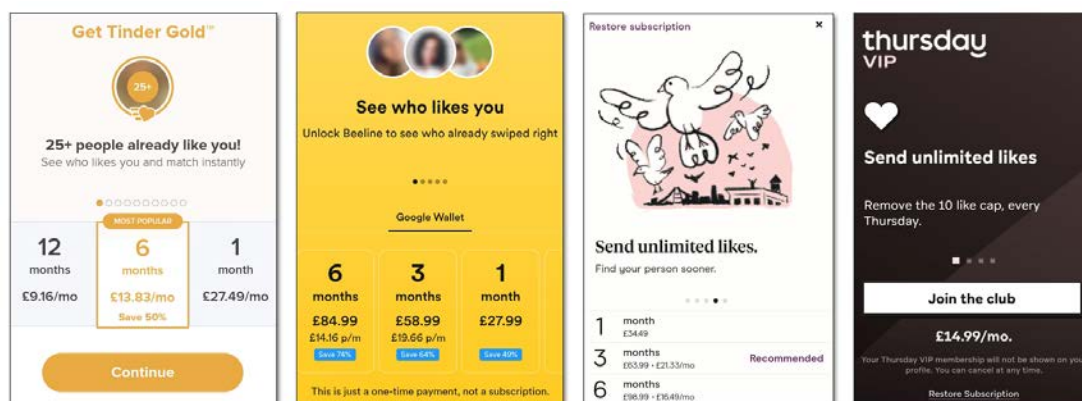
Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis is a systematic process of comparing different items together to distinguish any similarities and differences between them. Using a comparative analysis allows you to analyse an idea, problem or other solutions which then can help develop new strategies and solutions (Indeed, 2021). From the four dating apps selected I will be running an evaluation and comparison on their UX & UI designs features within their user journey. As the user journey has an identified area of focus, I will only form a comparison analysis over these areas of focus.

The following visuals showing for the comparison analysis will be displayed from left to right (**Tinder, Bumble, Hinge then Thursday**) to indicate which image is being referred to in the discussion on the analysis.

Freemium & Premium

Freemium is business model that offers basic features in a product or service. It comes from the combined of words of 'free' and 'premium'. A business offering freemium model often offer a free trial or a limited version to the user (Segal, 2021). Premium is the extension offering beyond a basic version of a product or service provided. Mancuso explains with premium, users often receive a higher level of customer satisfaction as there is more options provided helps to meet the users' needs to reach their end goal (Mancuso, 2021)

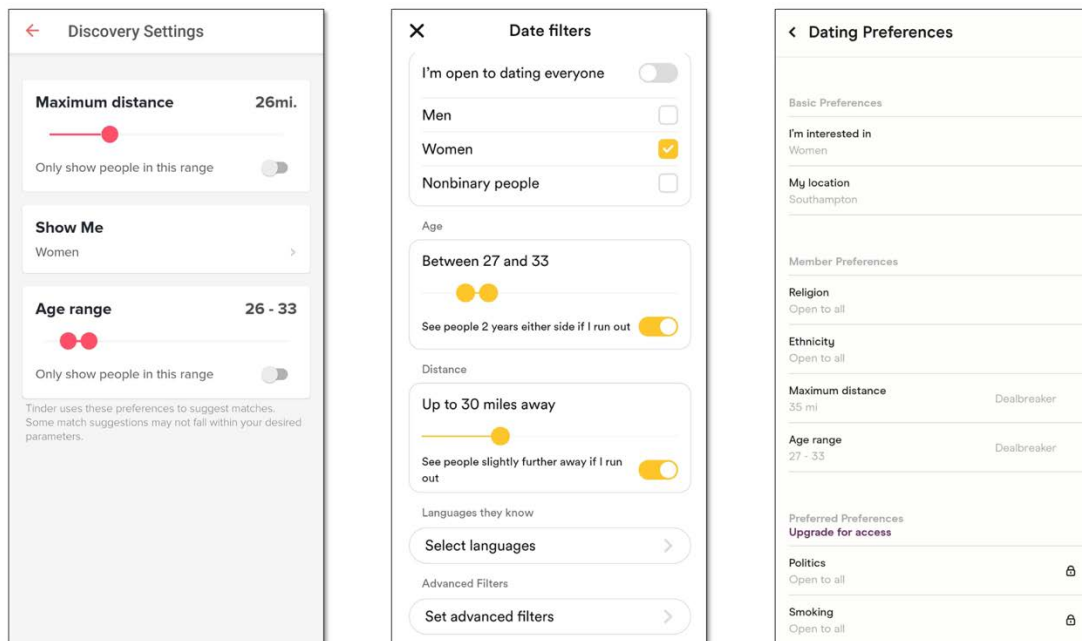


Tinder, Bumble, Hinge and Thursday all provide a freemium service offering a basic service for users. The four dating apps offer similar basic service across their freemium service, which are limited swipes per day and search filters, but the number of limited swipes and filters differentiate between the apps.

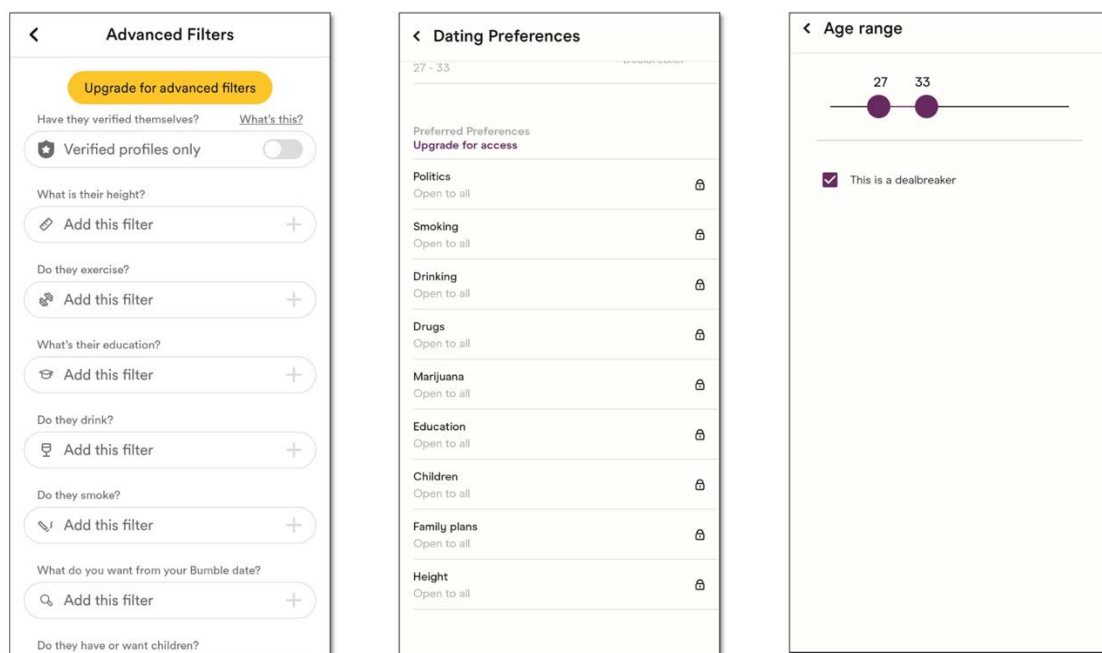
The premium service opens users to having more access and control with finding a match: offering unlimited swipes on other users, pushing user's profile to be seen by others sooner and more filters options to choose from which is provided across all four dating apps. Other premium features are more unique to the dating app, as Tinder's 'No Ads' turning off ads, Bumble's 'Incognito' only shows you to people you said yes to, Hinge's 'Stand Out' seek profiles that stand out and Thursday's 'Free ticket to events' gives user one free ticket to an event each week. Premium prices also differ between the apps, this would also determine if a user would receive a better experience depending on justification on price for them. For all variations of premium offers, see appendix ****.

Filters

Filters are a particular feature in dating apps that allows a user to select specific criteria or preferences of what they are looking for which then filters down to user matching those criteria in their search pile (Bumble, 2021). Different filters would be free to access for all users whereas other filters are only available to those paying for the premium service.



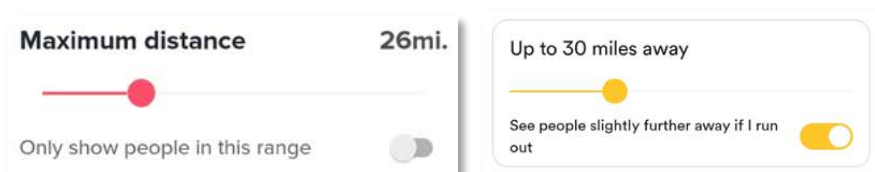
Tinder's filters offer a limited range of free filters of search criteria to distance, gender and age. As Bumble offers the same with the additional search for languages. Hinge offers the most into range of distance, location, gender, age, religion, and ethnicity. Thursday, however, does not provide and filters.



Tinder and Thursday don't offer any advanced filters to premium users. Bumble's premium service of advanced filters offers users to filter searches by height, type of exercise, education, if smoke or drink and what they are looking for. Hinge premium filters range to offer filters in politics, smoking, drinking, use of drugs or marijuana, type of education, have children, family plans and height.

Bumble and Hinge appears to offer users more availability and variety of filters to free and paid users. With Hinge providing more free filters, this offers freemium users to get more out free service giving a better user experience in the free service of a dating app. While additionally Hinge also offers more variety in its premium service offering better user experience to find someone to paying users. However this is dependable to the user's own personal thoughts of what is a good user experience as such as the filters provided by the app and the cost of the premium service to access such advanced filters.

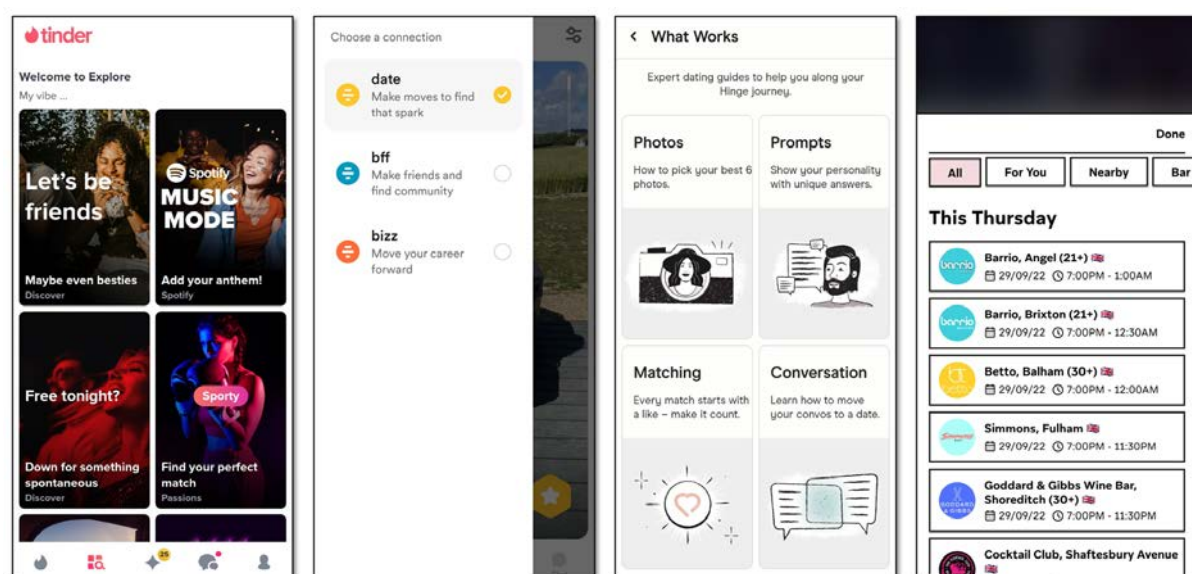
The user interface (UI) of Tinder and Bumble show a more intuitive display to how the user's interaction looks and acts. Tinder and Bumble display brightly coloured slide design elements that draws the attention of users.



Slide designs are helpful as they help users to explore a wide range of options more quickly and precise (Friedman, 2017). Which gives Tinder and Bumble users to have smooth precision to the filters like age and distance with the slide of the thumb. Hinge does also offer interaction of slide design to their filters; however, it requires the user to make additional click to and from the interactive slide design filter. UX World explains that additional click doesn't entirely give users a bad experience however, it is considered UX design should be made easier for the user and every click or interaction should help the user get closer to their goal while eliminating unnecessary points of the journey as possible (UX World, 2020).

Unique Features

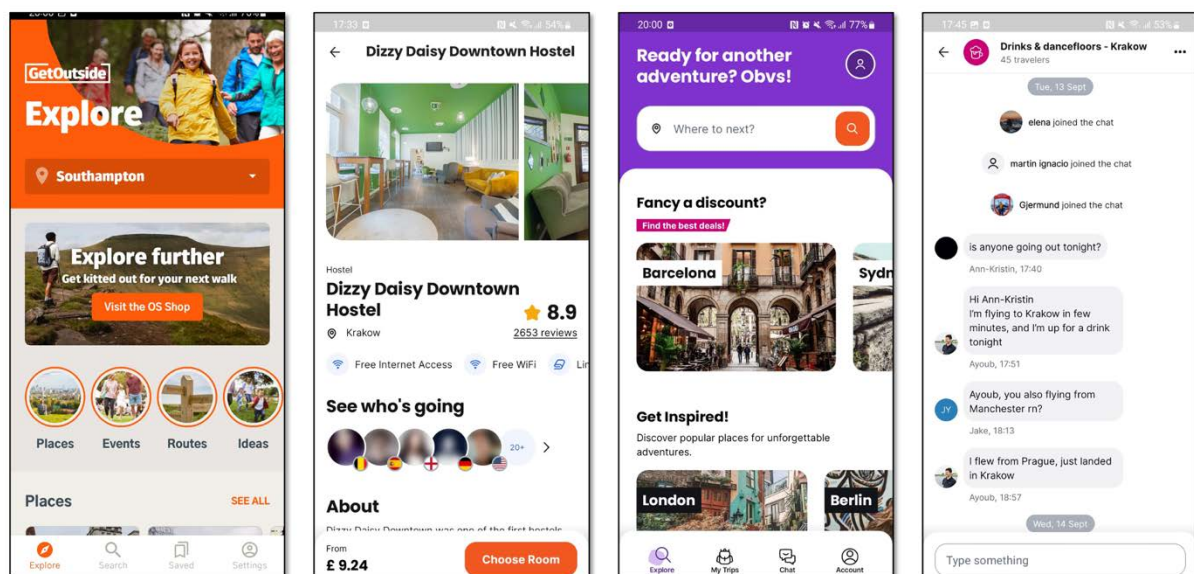
Here is looking at unique feature of the four dating apps and what makes them stand apart.



Tinder recent feature people swiping to find people in different categories like who is free tonight, music or coffee date etc, which make a simple experience for users to find someone through a particular category than search through all or pay premium for additional filters. Bumble has three categories of date (finding a date), bff (finding a friend) and bizz (business networking). These help to extend the apps purpose to other needs and multiple venues to user's needs. Hinge focus is helping users getting the most out of their dating experience by giving advice and tips on how to pick a good photo and how to move a conversation to a date. Thursday focuses on users having less online engagement to more offline engagement by surrounding its goal to create events and activities for users to attend and meet other singles face to face and by ensuring there is less app engagement it opens only one day a week on Thursday.

Ordinance Survey & Hostelworld

Ordinance Survey & Hostelworld were two apps considered to explore for inspirations and ideas towards the design challenge. As Ordinance Survey and Hostelworld are from two different industries it a comparison analyses will look to ideas design layouts. In the images below image 1 is of Ordinance survey and the other three screens is of Hostelworld.



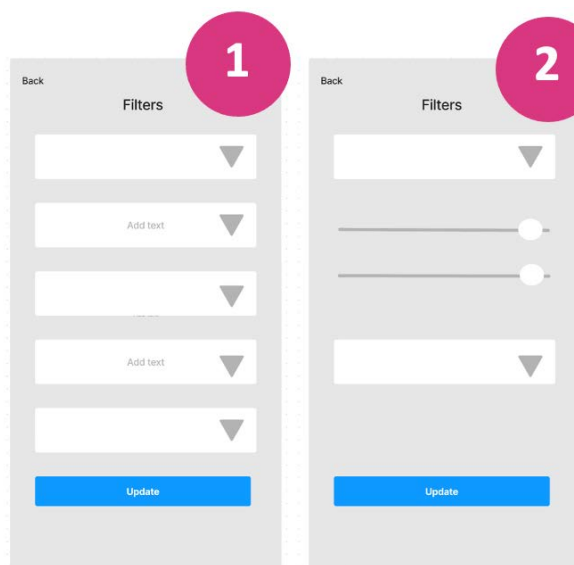
Ordinance Survey app 'Get Outside' shows interesting concepts and ideas to encourage people to get outside. From places to see, things to do and local events happening gives users things to do outside. It focuses on encourage uses to go outside that it is good for their personal wellbeing but also showing the UK to explore.

Hostelworld has new feature in their app that encourages the user to travel and book with Hostelworld. Hostelworld does this by allowing the user when they book a hostel through their app it shows who is else is staying at the hostel at the same time. Hostelworld have brought in the feature that enable users to chat to other users who has also booked with the same hostel. This allows users to interact with others in a social setting, plan to do things together there before leaving making the user experience more fulfilling.

Low fidelity wireframe

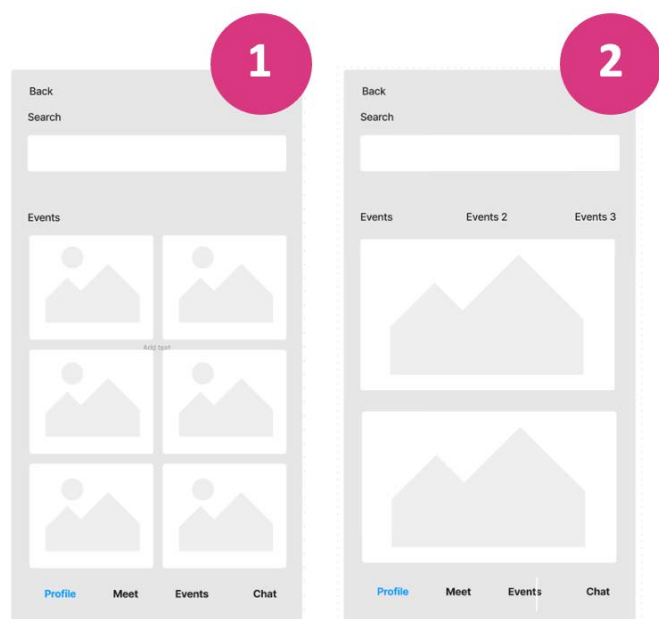
Low-fidelity wireframes are basic sketch mock-up designs of screens for a website or mobile app. They consist of basic shapes and blocks that would represent the ideas of buttons, heading and text. The help to lead the layout of the later stages of high-fidelity designing (Miro, 2022).

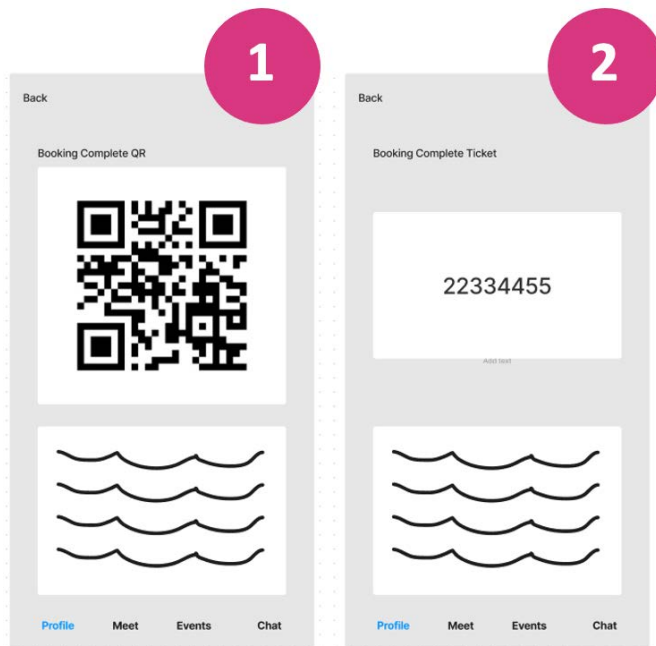
In a design sprint, the sketching of design solutions is typically partaken by every member involved in the design challenge, this is so the has a better chance to deliver a design solution. People see problems and solutions in different prospective and while one feature of a person's design works and another feature doesn't, another person's design feature may be a better solution which therefore combines working towards a better design solution. As I am working through the design sprint individually I have designed some areas with alternative design solutions to evaluate and decide upon in the next phase of the design sprint.



Here is the low-fidelity of the filter page to standard filters and advanced filters. Design 1 display the filters as drop down selection boxes so it can fit more on the screen at one time. Design 2 display less drop down boxes but interactive filter to.

Introducing the feature of events is inspired from the idea of Thursday providing events and activities to users for the opportunity to meet other people. Design 1 shows the list of the events for user to scroll through. Design 2 shows similar design with scrolling of events but groups the similar events across three sections.

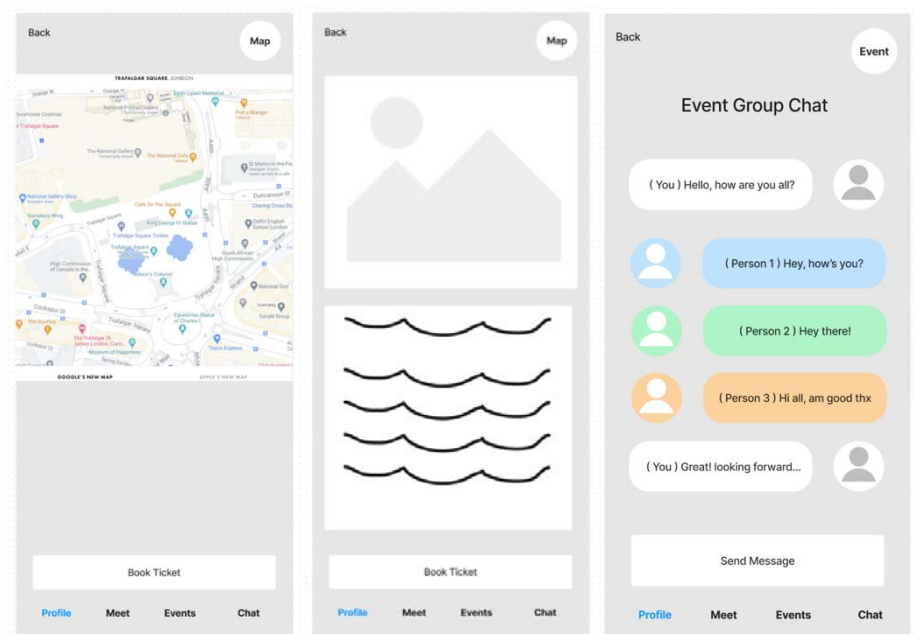




Following the process of booking an event, I designed two variations of the confirmation of booking to an event. Design 1 is showing a design the user receiving a QR code that they then take to the event to gain entry or partake. Design 2 follows similar process of confirmation of booking of an event and then taking to the event to access however the design is in representation of a ticket which gives users feeling of having a ticket.

Referring to the user centred and task centred design, it is understood that the area of focus is a user centred design as the aim of the project is to help users experience a more fulfilling experience in the dating app leading to a better dating experience and reaching the end goal of finding someone. However, considering a dating app functions between a free service and paid service I have to also consider providing task centred design factors, treating this like a real dating app.

The other three designs show the map location of an event. the middle design shows the details of the event, and the last design shows the group chat of the event unlocked.

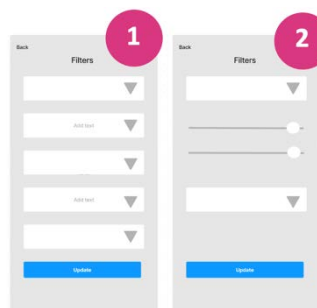


Agile phase 2 Summary

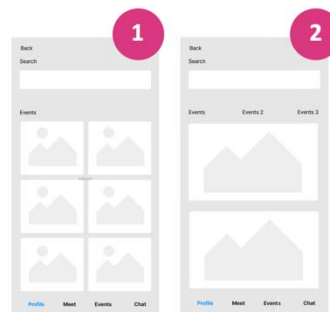
Conducting a comparison analysis has helped to give insight on existing dating apps evaluate strengths and weaknesses between them and what features could contribute to the design solution. Furthermore, the evaluation of the two apps from other industries sectors helped to give additional insight in user interaction that gives positive user experience. Which lead the design to a hybrid of the four dating apps and implementing user interaction design solutions from the other two app which help the basic design of the low-fidelity wireframing.

Phase 3 – Decision

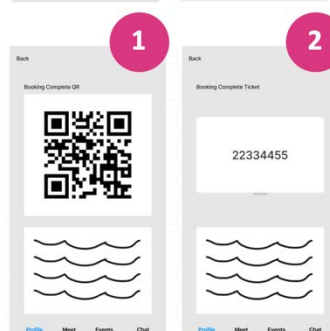
Phase 3 is about looking at all the solutions created from phase 2. They are formerly scattered across boards where the team decides on best solution sketches and combine them into a storyboard and laid out plan for the prototyping (Knapp, 2022). From the design variations I will decide which design to take forward giving my reasoning.



Design 1 a user would click over each filter to view and choose there setting. Design 1 offers more interaction with the user using a slide design and the filter giving a more intuitive experience while design 2 is considered more clicks for user to reach the goal. So decision will be to use design 2.



Design 1 would offer more interaction with the user using a slide design, whereas Design 2 a user would require to click between the events types. Design 1 is considered to be less clicks for user to reach the goal of looking at different events.



Use of implementing a QR code in a app could hinder a users' experience. Whereas a ticket version with a code gives the user the feel of having something tangible which comes to the decision of choosing design 2.

Phase 4 – Prototype

The next phase is taking the design solution into a simulated prototype to use the design in action. The prototype is created to give a simulation of what the real design could look like and function. In a design Sprint, creating a prototype over creating the real solution can be far more efficient of time and resources used. Knapp explains that giving the illusion of a real product through remains to gather realistic data from the testing. (J knapp, 2016).

Mobile Accessibility

Throughout the building process of the prototype whilst thinking of a user centred approach, I must also consider factors of accessibility when laying out the user interface (UI) and user experience (UX) in the design thinking. Mobile accessibility refers to providing website and applications to be accessible to people with disabilities when they are accessing those websites and/or apps through their mobile and other devices (Boskin, 2022).

The Web Content Initiative is an initiative of the World Wide Web developed for the effort to improve the accessibility of the internet for people with disabilities (Web Accessibility Initiative, 2022). They state out a series of accessibility guidelines and standards to help ensure business around the world are meeting the support of accessibility criteria for website or application for a handheld device (Web Accessibility Initiative, 2022).

The Material Design Accessibility explains by improving your product's accessibility for those with low vision, blindness, hearing impairments, cognitive impairments, motor impairments or situational disabilities (such as a broken arm) can enhance the usability for all users (Material Design Accessibility , 2022). It also benefits stakeholders of that website or app bringing more users to access their information, use their service or buy any products (Usability.gov, 2022).

Through the process of the creating my prototype I will also consider implementing my design to follow the guidelines of mobile accessibility, this is to support fair user experience and accessibility for all users.

Determine screen Size

Beginning the prototype, I decided to use a screen size of '390px (Width) to 844px (Height) which is the same screen size dimension of the iPhone 13. It is important when designing a mobile app to consider the terms of accessibility of information visible on a screen. As mobile devices come in a range of different screen sizes, smaller screens are limited to the amount of information that is accessible to see or attain at one time (Boskin, 2020).

A design sprint would typically focus to limited screen resolutions as the purpose is to test the illusion of how the product would work in real life and naturally a real mobile app would undergo coding that could adapt to the change of screen resolution.

Touch Targets and Placements

Buttons are referred as touch targets, they are onscreen elements that a user can touch to perform an action (Support.Google, 2022). When implementing the design of these buttons I had to consider correct dimensions that meet the recommendation sizes for a touch target, this is to ensure to have a reliable interaction and meet accessibility standards. Referring to the Material Design Accessibility guidelines recommends touch targets to be at least 48 x 48 dp (density-independent pixels) that of a physical size 9mm, regardless of screen size (Material Design, 2022).

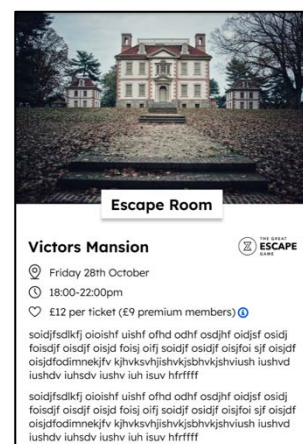
Typography

Typography is the art of arranging letters and text which presents clear, legible, and visually appealing to the reader. This involves the arrangements of font style, appearances and structure that creates clear understanding, specific emotions, and messages within the text (Hannah, 2022). Typography also plays a important role in UI design as it can influence or affect a user's experience when interacting with a app of website.

For the purpose of the prototype to simulate a dating app, a name was chosen to give the dating app. Keeping it simple, the name chosen for the dating app was 'Let's'. Let's is a suggestive word that a person uses to do something they like doing along with someone else (Grammarly, 2020). Let's is an encouraging word and the concept events, activities playing a part in the dating app prototype it plays on the feeling doing an event or activity together.

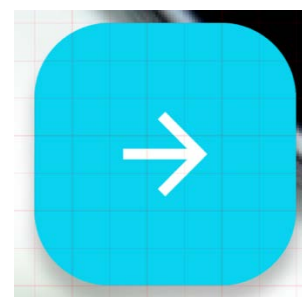
Captions, adjacent text, and embedded text

For display details of an event, I needed to consider accessibility around the key information about the image. The Material Design accessibility guidelines recommends that designs of text place under the image as embedded text inside an imagery can be difficult to read then not accessible (Material Design, 2022)



Indicating elements

Indicating elements are action verbs that indicate what an element or link does if tapped. Action verbs indicate what an element or link does if tapped, rather than what an element looks like This describes what an element does without relying on visual acuity.



Slide designs

Slide designs are helpful as they help give users ability to select a precision from a wide range of options more quickly (Harley, 2015). The design of the interactive slide design was inspired from the dating app Bumble. As from the previous evaluation in the comparison analyses Bumble displayed good slide design that was smooth in interaction and UI was pleasing to user's eyes.

Age

Between 18 and 19

See people 2 years apart if I run out ☐

Distance

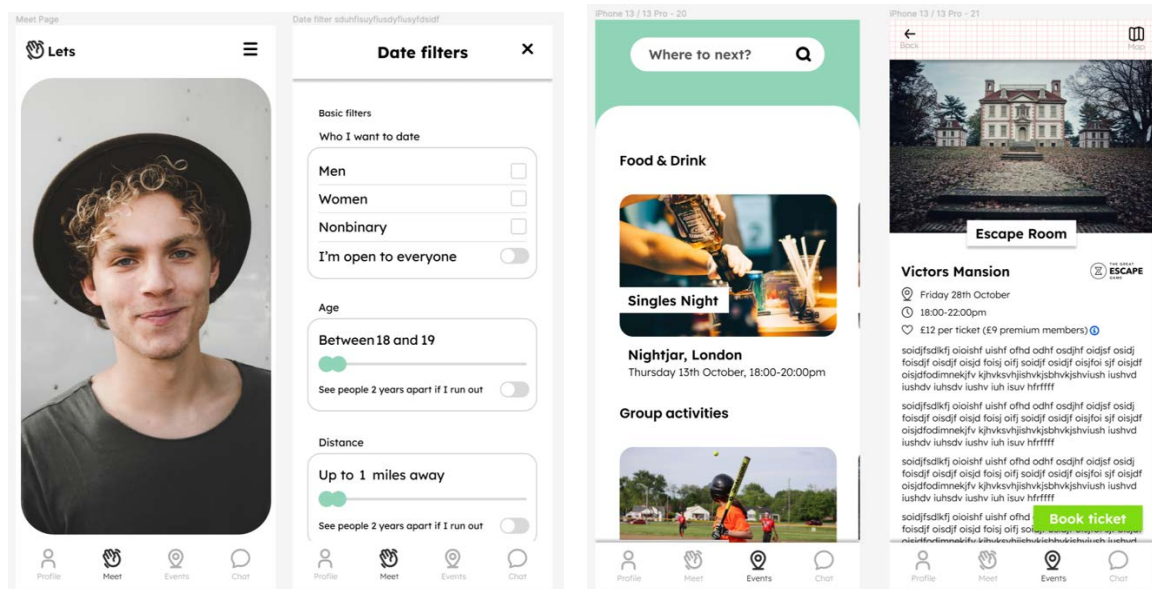
Up to 1 miles away

See people 2 years apart if I run out ☐

Agile phase 4 Summary

The design of the prototype showed high fidelity of the design and interaction of the dating app. Through its design it considered UX and UI principles which aimed to work alongside the importance of accessibility. Through the designing and implementing of simulating interactions a real dating app, it became apparent of the aimed time taken on the prototype started to go longer than anticipated. This is because time being spent researching and learning and testing of implementing in app interactions to user testing would feel close experience to a real dating app and aim not risk affecting testing and result feedback.

Below shows some of the high-fidelity display on the dating app prototype.



Other screens can be seen in the appendix below***

Phase 5 – Testing

The final phase of the Design Sprint is the testing. This testing involves the created prototype that has been built up from carefully selected design work of UX solutions and realistic user interface where it will face number of external customers that would typically be a target audience. According to Knapp, a good number of target customer to test is five, as he explains testing with more people doesn't lead to further insights just more work spent on interviewing to confirm similar results (Knapp, 2016).

UX Research

UX research is collectively analysing target users' needs and wants from a system or product which helps to gather insight to users around use of a product. The benefits of conducting user research are it brings insight to the users but also helps to guide towards successful designs (Interaction Design, 2022).

There are two paths that UX research follows to collect data which are qualitative or quantitative measures. The common research method used is qualitative measures as this offers insight to users' motivation and needs, following with quantitative measures which then might take place to test theories or results (Rosencrance, 2022).

There are several research methods which can be used to gather user insight and help build better understanding towards product development. A/B testing, card sorting, and surveys are quantitative research, which focuses on numerical data and statistics evidence. Where focus groups, interviews and usability testing are qualitative research, which delivers understanding on user's behaviour of thinking, feelings and reasoning of their decisions

For testing of the dating app I decided to use 'usability testing' and survey response.

Usability testing observes the process of real users who are set tasks to complete using the designed product. It helps reveals the problems and frustrations users come when trying to complete a task. (Experience UX, 2022). This will help to lead redesign of the dating app if similar problems occur with different users performing the same task. Survey are series of questions given to a number of users which will helps researchers learn more about the people behind who use the end product. (Rosencrance, 2022). This will help with future design of how the dating app would best suit the target audience.

Data consent and Ethics

The testing and data collection for the design sprint remains to continue to follow government guidelines of UK legislation in General Data Protection Regulations and other Data Protection Laws. In complying to meet with such legislations it maintains to follow Solent University good practice in demonstrating when conducting a study: honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, the care and respect of all participants involved, and confidentiality of any personal information involved (Solent University, 2022). Please refer the Appendix for copy of the ethics form completed.

Disclaimer

Through the construction of the prototype there was rigorous testing of how the prototype looked and interacted on the screen on my smartphone and laptop. However coming to final testing of the prototype I tested the prototype across other mobile devices and desktop to ensure the prototype was functional across other platforms. These testing came to show the prototype was functional across desktop however some mobile devices with a smaller screen size made the prototype not fully accessible in either the prototype too big for the screen or the layout design completely dysfunctional. This caused some delay to the testing of the prototype with respondents as may affect the interaction, experience, and results of the user testing.

In addition, it was also considered that there would be a risk to the data collection from the user testing in facing inactive functions or interactions. As the prototype is designed on the target area of finding, meeting, and interaction with other users, features like the profile page and interaction of swiping on a person were not designed into the prototype as these were not the area of focus. However, participants in the user testing may not understand or cause bad experience and draw them away from the aim of the testing and target area that was focused within the prototype.

To help reduce risk of data collection being affected a disclaimer was created at the start of the prototype to give acknowledgement to the participants in the user testing of the dating app. A disclaimer is a statement that is aimed to address specific points acknowledging awareness, understanding and liability to the reader (dictionary.com, 2022).

The disclaimer explained the prototyped is designed to gather research towards the studies of this research project and the prototype is designed to focus on the target areas to determine if it helps improve user experience for a better dating experience, which there it explains as a result functions like the profile page and swiping feature are not functional and these were not identified as a target area within the research. It also explains risk to the user testing may occur depending on the origin of platform will be testing from if be a desktop or mobile and screen size. And lastly, it was explained that if accessing the prototype from a desktop then the user may be required to hold the mouse button to drag to simulate some scrolling of the thumb as the prototype is designed as a mobile app. To see the disclaimer see appendix **.

The Survey and Responses

Questions 1 and 2 were generic questions of age and gender, these were in place if there any differentiation between age or gender in the experience. Questions 3-5 are focused on the accessibility of the prototype design and interaction. Asking users how accessible the features were to ensure user experience was carried out. Questions 6-9 are linear designed questions to help gauge if and how much the design solution and feature concepts would enhance a user's experience. Questions 10-12 are open questions for users to give personal views, opinions around the design solution and dating app feature concept

Survey Link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScVfBillmBJtIE4BbJQOEvv3_T_GYoMgH9IRvIWOKC22mY2vA/viewform?usp=sf_link

In question 3, 4 and 5 showing below, respondents were asked:

- **Was the content such as text, buttons images accessible to see?**
- **Was the interaction buttons accessible and interactive to use?**
- **Was the navigation smooth and easy to go between pages and scrolling?**

All five respondents said yes that the content displayed was accessible to see and all five said the navigation was smooth and easy going between pages and scrolling. However, when asked about the accessibility of the buttons there was some conflict in responses, with respondents saying having when clicking the book ticket on an event it would take them to another event page. Another respondent had also said that when looking at the advanced filters they thought text 'Advanced filters' was a button as its gives the impression that it is a button when its' not.

In question 6, 7, 8 and 9 showing below, respondents were asked:

- **How much do you think the events feature would enhance a user's experience in a dating app?**
- **How much do you think the event group chats would enhance a user's experience in a dating app?**
- **How much do you think the type of advanced filters would enhance your user experience?**
- **How likely would you use this dating app over another dating app?**

All five respondents rated 7 and over that having event features to meet other people would enhance their experience in a dating app. All five respondents rated 6 and above that having a feature to chat together to others who are also going to the same event would enhance their experience in a dating app. All five respondent rated 6 and above with advanced filters to groupings would enhance their experience in a dating app and lastly all five respondents rated 8 and over that they would likely use this dating app over another dating app.

In question 10, 11, 12 and 13 showing below, respondents were asked:

- **From your experience with the prototype, was there anything you thought worked well?**
- **From their experience with the prototype was there anything you thought did not work well?**
- **Do you think the concept of events or incentives for singles like group activities or for two would encourage you to meet?**
- **Are there any recommendations or suggestion you would like to add for further improvement in the future?**

From the experienced with using the dating app prototype, said that the like the idea of having an event feature available in a dating app and would use this feature, and some also saying they liked the concept of chatting to other user that are also going to the event, with one respondent expressing how this would help them feel more comfortable then going to an event after knowing someone from the group chat of the event.

Another respondent also expressed liking to advance filter that could filter interest to find others of similar interests. In response to what didn't work well, respondents showed similar barriers with the buy button of the not functioning accordingly, taking them to another event page and back. Other barriers expressed was a struggle to scroll down the events page from one respondent and the advanced heading misleading in looking like a button to another respondent. With discussing of overall experience respondents like the concept of ideas but encountered barriers from prototyping errors. And as a result 4 of the 5 respondents said they would be encouraged to meet someone through the concept of event activities.

Findings Summary

The findings did show some positive indicators of desire towards to a concept of introducing events and activities features towards the dating experience and implementing a group chat feature that unlocked for users attending an event chat together prior going which would give some users confidence who feel anxious about meeting someone or group of people for the first time.

With the overall experience of respondents interacting with the dating app prototype there led to some barrier of the book button not taking the user through to simulating a confirm booking process and present them with a e-ticket to for the event and showing them they can now begin talking to other people attending the same event. From these barriers occurring within use of the prototype this led dampening the user testing experience and affecting user testing result outcome.

Design Sprint Summary

The design sprint helped to give insight towards the design problem, understanding the user's pain points within their user journey. Learning the user's problems and where in the user path these most occurred allowed to refine the area of focus towards the design solution. Conducting a comparison analysis of existing dating apps and other industry apps helped to learn and identify a design solution that would help towards meeting the user's needs in the target area with their user journey. The sketching low-fidelity helped to visualize the design solution and creating multiple variations of design solution helped to evaluate to refine the designs for a better solution.

The prototyping led a high-fidelity design which aimed to give users a more realistic experience to a real dating app. However with the development of the prototype led to some setback in learning how design particular interaction such as a interactive filter to simulate a close experience of a real dating app which therefore led the delay of the user testing. If given more time or completion of the prototype was on time, further exploring could have been taken into behavioural interactions, such as if implementing such features which encouraged users to meet and use less of the app would this further enhance their user experience?

Did we meet the design sprint objective?

From overview of the design sprint and the design challenge presented at the start of the sprint, the sprint manage to create a function that integrated with the users online and

offline dating experience through engagement of social interaction among other users and making those interaction easier with events, specific filters and group chats therefore giving user fulfilment and reaching their end goal in the user journey.

Conclusion

From the findings it can suggest that there remains a gap for opportunities to enhance user experience in online dating. As the findings show, users are feeling fatigued with how online dating apps function. Whilst new functions or features are introduced to the online dating platforms to help enhance user experience and bring them out of data fatigue, the majority of users prefer the physical element of meeting in person.

This leads to the next part of this study to indicate how to merge the physical aspect of dating to blend with the online dating experience to optimize the user experience and meet the overall research aim. This follows to analyse existing dating apps, identify key UX principles used for these dating apps and conduct primary research with industry experts and/or dating app users to further investigate and identify suggestive solution to any problem solving of online dating.

From the survey and interviews, it showed the common theme was spending too much time on the dating apps, rather than meeting. This was due to restrictions on filters unless upgrading. This led to trying another dating app but it seems all the dating apps work the same and therefore the same process was repeated. Because of the lack of filters, a high number of profiles are shown to look through, which resulted in fatigue, giving up and therefore less matches. This suggests that the user experience could be improved by adding filters in the free service. Another common theme was the preference of physical dating rather than online. Both these themes lead to the development of the prototype by offering more tailored options for matches, keeping in mind business values and objectives, which in turn would add value to users experience keeping them using the app and result in better matches and more chance to meet physically.

The design sprint showed some opportunity of a gap in online dating apps to offer better user experience. Showing the results of design sprint, gave positive response the design solution and feedback the corresponds to prior findings user's feelings. Suggesting less time spent to be used in a dating reduces the weight of dating fatigue and implementing the design feature of events encourages users to meet other people in person which there they can create those meaningful connection that overall helps give users a more fulfilling dating experience and helping to reach their end goal purpose of a dating app.

Learning Outcome

Learning to use a design thinking process has helped approach a project and break it down into smaller tasks. Allows to develop the design thinking skills to a design problem and develop a design thinking mindset. It drew in critical thinking aligning to the design problem. Overview giving myself good practice of the learning and put the skills into practice to reach the design problem to solve.

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Dating apps features and competitors

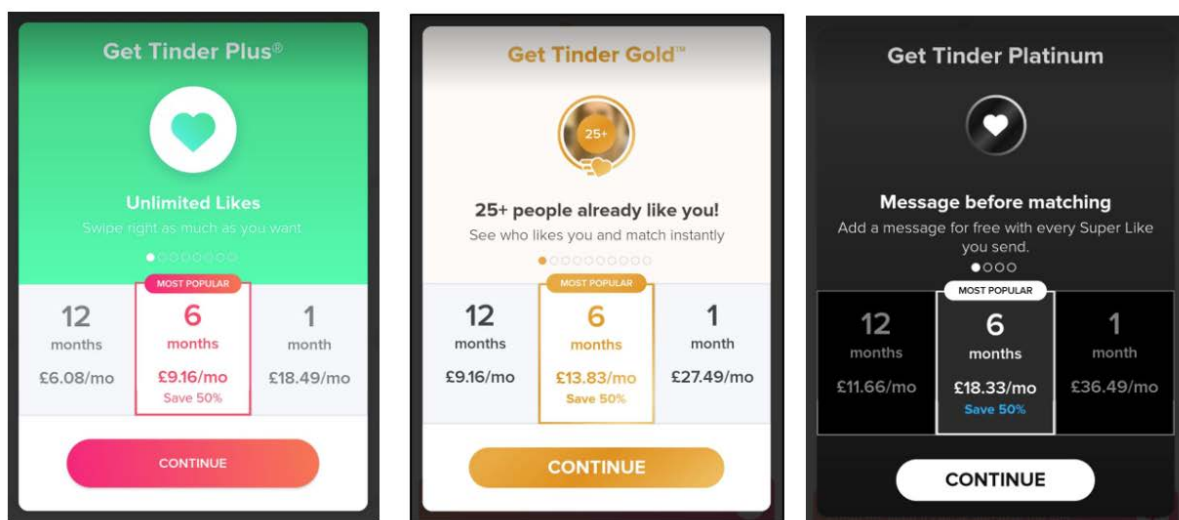
1. Rematch with expired connections
2. Extend matches by 24 hours before expiring
3. Unlock further preference/filters
4. Backtrack on accidental wrong swipes
5. Getting unlimited swipes
6. Put your profile in front to be seen sooner
7. Change your location to different city
8. Get extra enhanced swipes/notification to send someone you really like

Below are some of the close competitor



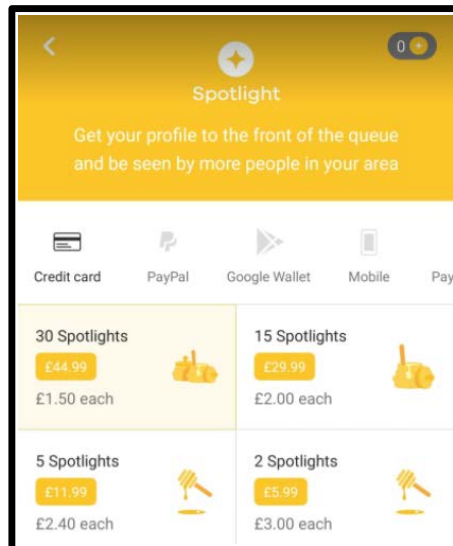
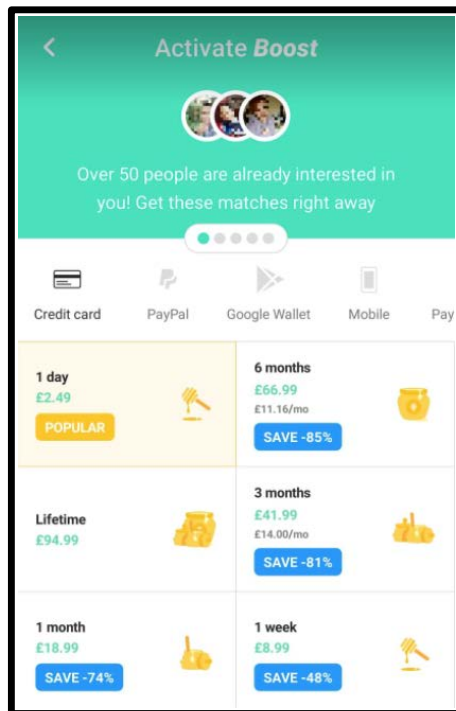
Tinder is an Online dating app that allows users to anonymously swipe like or dislike profiles based on their photos, a small bio, and common interests. Once two users have 'matched', they can exchange messages.

<https://tinder.com/en-GB/feature/swipe>

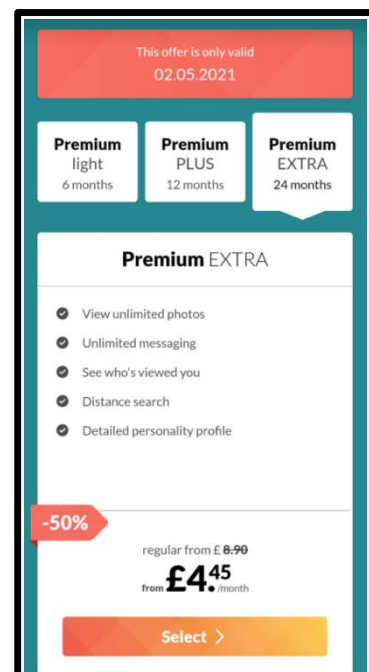
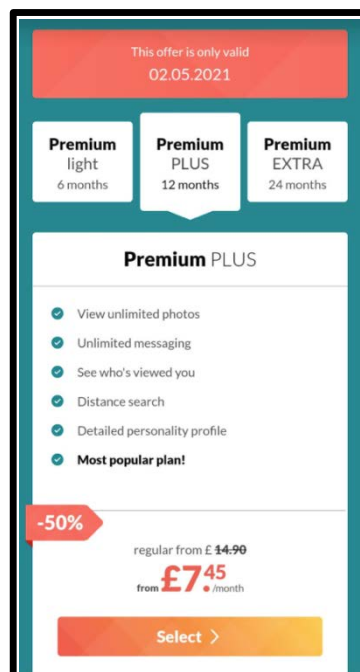
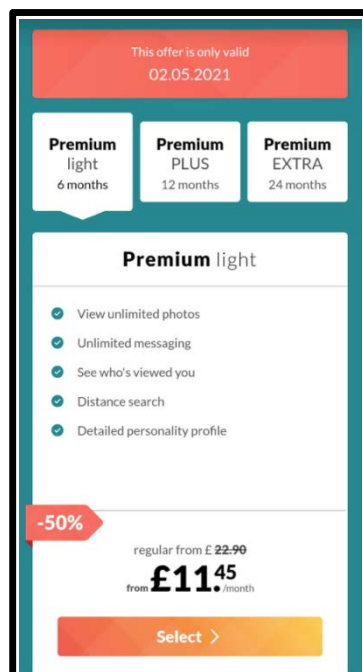


Bumble is a location-based social application that facilitates communication between interested users. In heterosexual matches, only female users can make the first contact with matched male users, while in same-sex matches, either person can send a message first.

<https://bumble.com/en/>

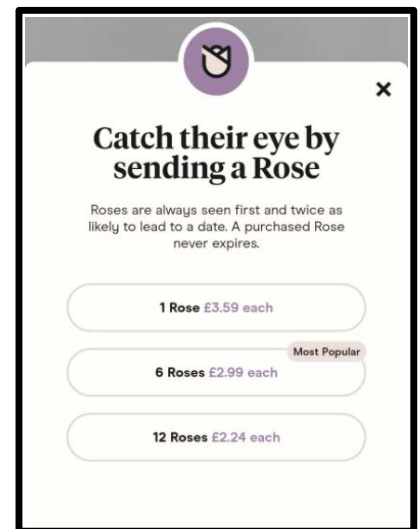
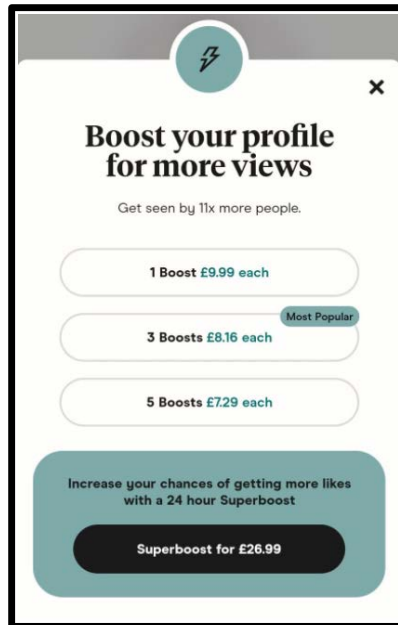
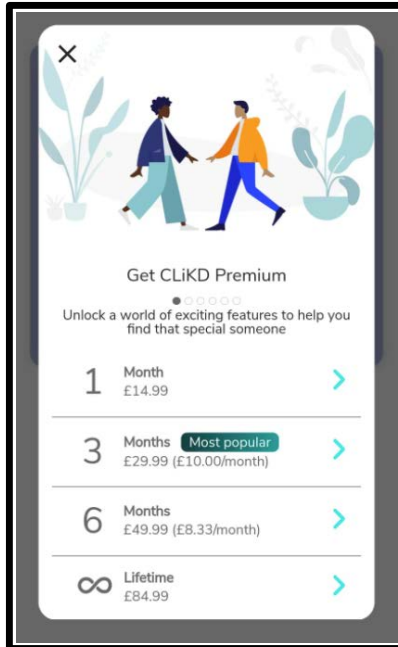


eharmony is an online dating website launched in 2000. eharmony is based in Los Angeles, California, and owned by German mass media company ProSiebenSat.1 Media.



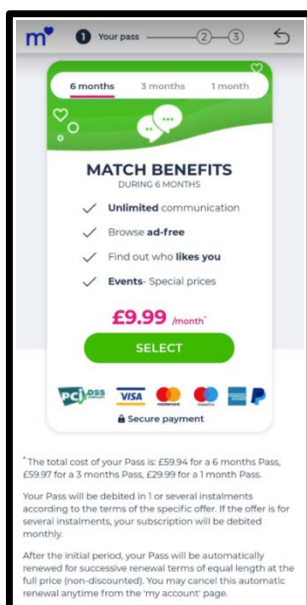
Hinge

Hinge is a dating app founded by Justin McLeod in 2012. Hinge bills itself as a "relationship app" and claims to emphasize more long-term connections between users



Match.com

Match is an online dating service with web sites serving over 50 countries in twelve languages. Match is owned by Match Group, which owns several online dating services.



Industry Expert Interview Request

Invite Matthew to connect

Build a quality network by connecting only with people you know.

Message (optional)

Hello Matthew,
I'm Mike, I'm a student studying a Master in Digital Design at Solent University, I am doing my final major project on how to help improve UX design in dating app to give better dating experience, I wonder if I can get an interview for research as an industry expert, many thanks Mike

0 / 300


PREMIUM

Don't know Matthew? Send an InMail with Premium to introduce yourself. More people reply to an InMail than a connection request.

[Retry Premium Free](#)


Cancel

Send




thursday

Available on the App Store | GET IT ON Google play




Matthew McNeill Love · 2nd
Co-founder & COO at Thursday
London, England, United Kingdom · [Contact info](#)
500+ connections

 1 mutual connection: Lisa Curtiss


✓ Pending

Message


More



Thursday | The Dating App






Oxford Brookes University



thursday

One day you'll meet.





Thursday

George Rawlings · 2nd


Co-founder & CEO at Thursday

United Kingdom · [Contact info](#)

500+ connections




9 mutual connections: James Alderman, Emily Preston (FCmgr), and 7 others

✓ Pending
🔒 Message
More



Matthew McNeill Love

Active now




Michael Gregory · 9:03 PM

Hello Matthew,


I'm Mike, I'm a student studying a Master in Digital Design at Solent University, I am doing my final major project on how to help improve UX design in dating app to give better dating experience, I wonder if I can get an interview for research as an industry expert, many thanks

Mike



Matthew McNeill Love · 9:03 PM


Hi Michael, congrats on your choice of course. I bet it's really interesting, very happy to jump on a call with you for 30 mins, can you do tomorrow at 3pm? Best wishes, Matt



Michael Gregory · 9:25 PM

Hi Matthew, thankyou for getting back to me. And thanks, yeah it's a fun and interesting course and excited for thus project. Thats great 👍 30 minute will help alot. 3pm tomorrow works well for me. Would you like me to send you an invitation?

Write a message...


...

Ethics Form

Project status

Status

● ● ● Approved

Actions

Date	Who	Action	Comments
10:19:00 15 July 2022	Anthony Basiel	Supervisor approved	I approve this project. - Anthony
09:38:00 20 June 2022	Michael Gregory	Principal investigator submitted	

Ethics release checklist (ERC)

Project details

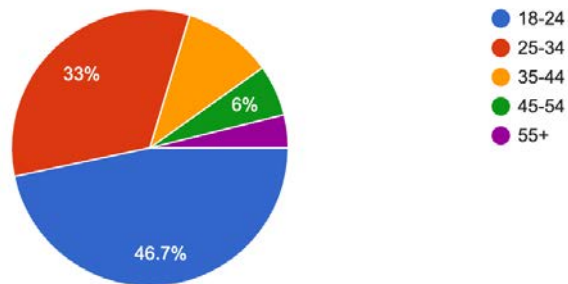
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Principal investigator:	<input type="text" value="Michael Gregory"/>
Faculty:	<input type="text" value="Faculty of Business, Law and Digital Technologies"/>
Level:	<input type="text" value="Postgraduate"/>
Course:	<input type="text" value="Digital Design"/>
Unit code:	<input type="text" value="MAA111"/>
Supervisor name:	<input type="text" value="Anthony Basiel"/>
Supervisor search:	<input type="text"/>
Other investigators:	<input type="text"/>

Survey Responses Results

Q1 How old are you?

467 responses

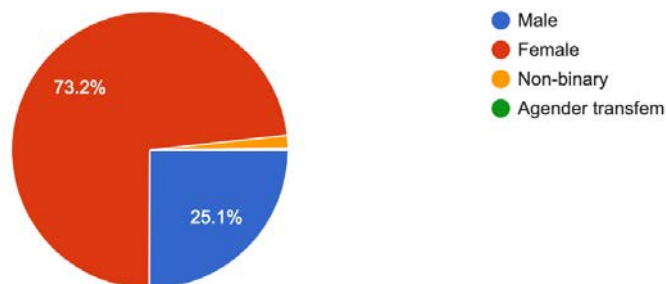
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Q2 What gender do you identify as?

467 responses

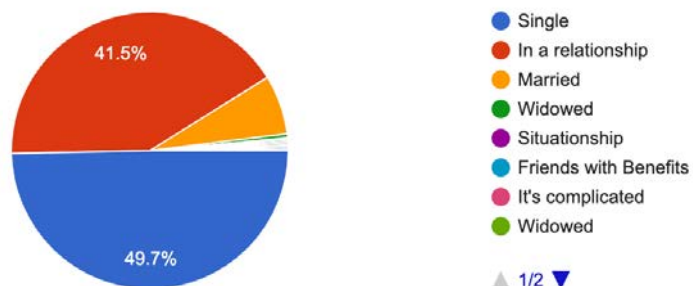
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Q3 What is your current relationship status?

463 responses

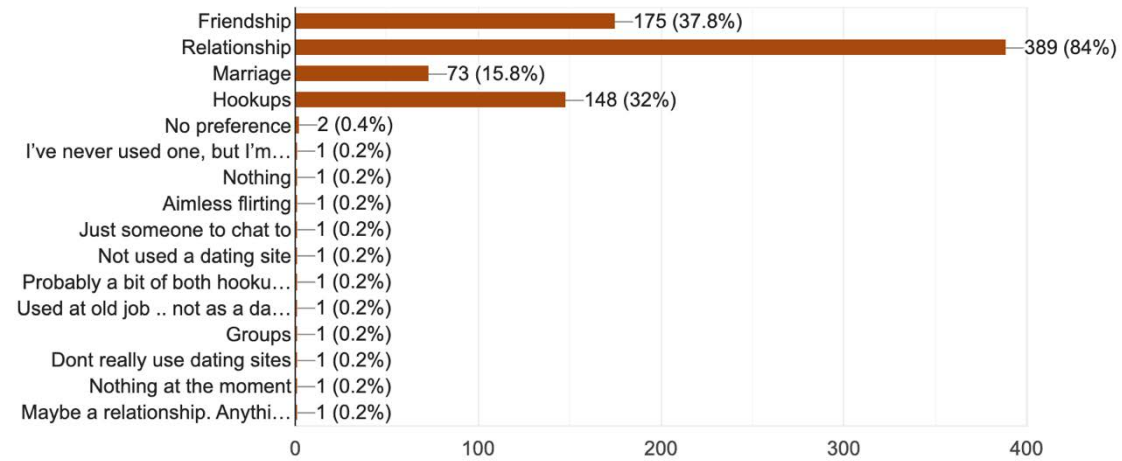
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Q4 What have/would you be looking for through these dating sites? Please tick any that applies

[Copy](#)

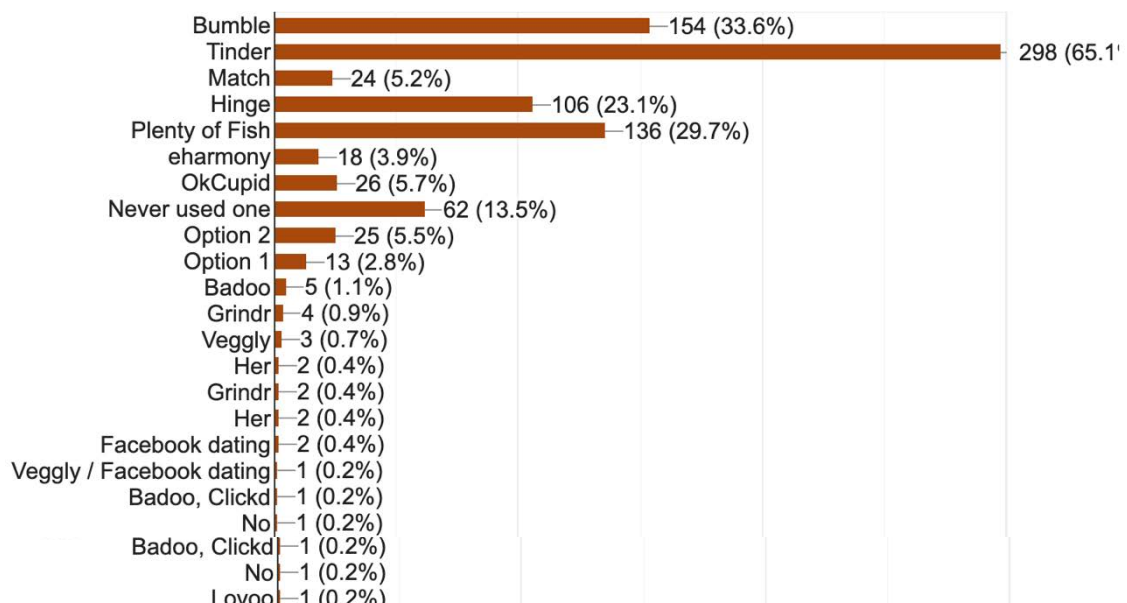
463 responses



Q5 Have you used any of the following dating apps or sites to meet dates? Please tick any that applies

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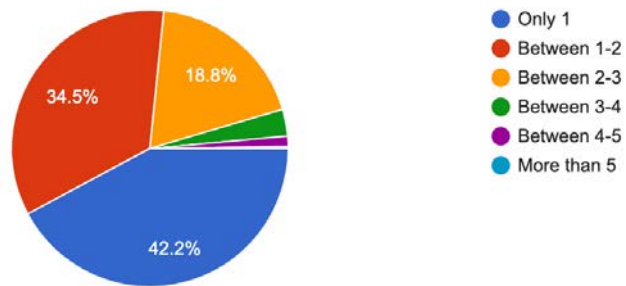
458 responses



Q6 Have you used more than one dating app or site at a time?

 Copy

415 responses



Q7 If used more than one, what are the reasons of using more than one dating app or site?

225 responses

Variety

More options

Variety

Different people

More people

not many vegans

More variety

Boredom

I didn't get many matches on one app so I used two to just increase my total number of matches and potential dates

More profiles

Ease of use

Wider Selection in the Very Limited Southampton Area

Selection

On bumble is nice to open up first and almost be more strict

To hopefully get more response

More people means more of a chance of finding someone

Running out of swipes on one

Too get a more diverse group of potential matches

Different types of people

Different people on different sites

More chance of success

Different users

Some apps are better than others at finding matches.

They are different

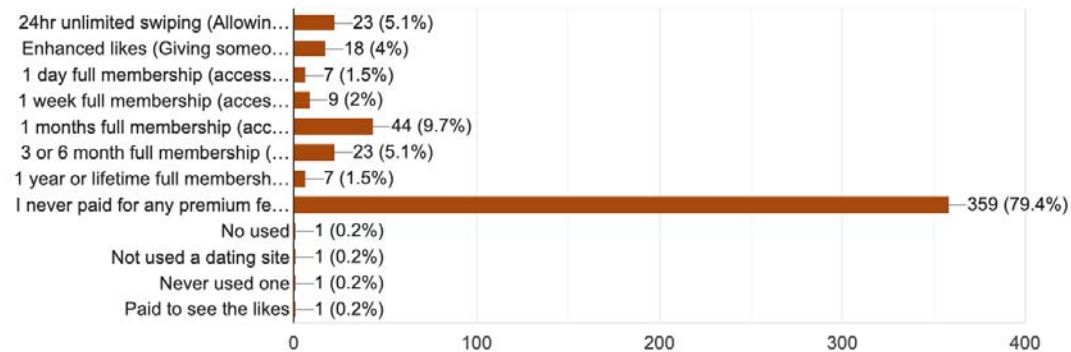
Never used one- wasn't an option.

Q8 Have you ever paid for any the premium features such as:



(24hr unlimited swiping, enhanced likes, being more noticeable or full premium memberships on a dating app or site? Please tick any that applies.

452 responses



Q9 If you have paid for any of premium features, what are the reason for you paying for any of the paid services?

102 responses

Replying to messages and being able to control who you meet

So I can see the likes

Want to see who had liked me.

To see if it made a difference in finding matches

Because otherwise couldn't see whom likes me

Desperation.

Encounter fewer limitations to using the app.

To increase my chance of finding someone

It was a mistake

Q9 If you have paid for any of premium features, what are the reason for you paying for any of the paid services?

102 responses

To see if it made a difference in finding matches

Because otherwise couldn't see whom likes me

Desperation.

Encounter fewer limitations to using the app.

To increase my chance of finding someone

It was a mistake

More swipes on tinder when i used it

To read messages

Views on profile, see who has liked my profile rather than just scrolling through everyone

Continued below

Q9 If you have paid for any of premium features, what are the reason for you paying for any of the paid services?

102 responses

I wanted to use this space to add some context to my below responses. I used to invite people out on dates a lot and message frequently so it was a platform which I really enjoyed. Your beneath suggestions might be a good incentive if you found really good corporate partnerships but, honestly, I preferred going to local, independent venues for dates (in Bournemouth that's places like Ojo Rojo, Smoking Aces, The Stable, South Coast Cafe, Flirt). It expresses something about my character because I'm probably introducing you to a lesser expected place. I also feel like, if you're struggling financially to go out on a date, there are other inventive ways to do so. I liked grabbing a few beers or wine and sitting on the beach, having an ice cream or chips by the pier, or grabbing a pizza to share and going to the park with my dates. To be clear, I always paid for and decided what the date should be so I'm not saying this as someone who prefers to be 'treated'. Unfortunately, I think the big thing that prevents people from going on dates with people off Tinder is fear of meeting up with a person who might traumatise them. The key to success on Tinder, in my opinion, is being transparent. Having a strong, characterful bio, having clear pictures (some with friends, some not, some including your hobbies etc.), having other social media accounts attached to your profile, expressing yourself in a positive way whilst chatting, inviting them to talk to you on a different social network etc. There are unspoken rules as to what makes a person seem like a good, approachable option. Flexibility is important too because your date might hate the idea of going out for cocktails at a Slug and Lettuce. I've often been out with a person and changed plans because of a change of weather, mood, or even an acknowledgement that my idea doesn't suit the person. It's important to pay attention to what the other person is like and what you think they'll appreciate. So, tying yourself to a specific place isn't always wise and a voucher could cause that. To address your voucher idea in these terms, a strong variety of options would probably help but I think it would be marginal as an incentive to actually go out.

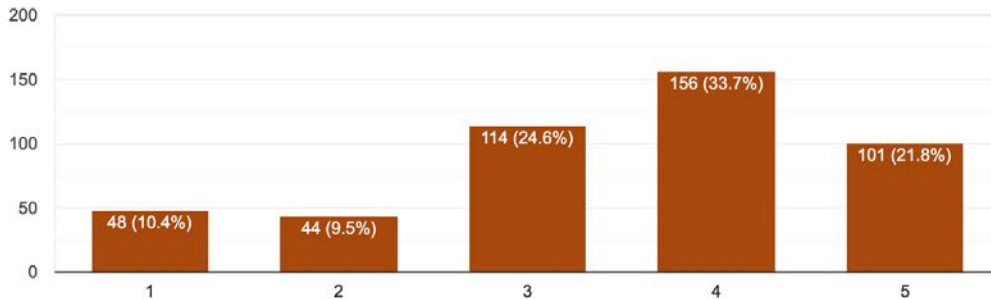
Also - there are massive social implications to going on a date and using coupons overtly, even as a student or recent graduate. I've had arguments with people about who's going to pay because I want to and they want to be chivalrous. So, if someone tried to pay for our date together with a coupon, I would definitely insist on paying for us both which would make common experience vouchers a little redundant. I'd argue that they would need to be expensive dates like going to a theme park, museum/gallery, a spa or gym, a ticket-only National Trust location or a live performance because that would have a greater justification and it could be more covert. However, those are riskier things to suggest for dates and, unless you're like me and do open relationships, you probably wouldn't be on Tinder at the stage because you'd have to spend time together to trust each other to commit to that expense. That being said, maybe subsidising a trip out to a nice location through railway vouchers or hotel/Air B&B vouchers would work for some lovers or even for long distance ones. I'd be willing to pay for premium if the promotions were worthwhile but not for corporate restaurants and bars like TGI Fridays, Be at One and Pizza Express. To add to this, a Deliveroo voucher might be a good option because some people prefer to opt for dates at home and, again, takeaway vouchers would be covert. A random £50 food voucher to cook your date a nice meal could be cute, again. Issue with Tinder is that people tend to uninstall it and reinstall it when they need it; Bumble might be better because it's seen as a platform for making friends more than Tinder is. For the most part though, these pitches I'm throwing your way might not work due to the inconsistency of Tinder's user base.

To summarise though, overtly expensive things would be a brilliant incentive to use a specific app or service and purchase their premium packages as well as maintain loyalty to a certain platform. However, they wouldn't necessarily encourage those all important first dates and you have to be careful to manage a lover's expectations. Covert options like takeaway vouchers, spa product retail vouchers (such as Lush products for an at-home spa date) railway and hotel vouchers, premium Tesco/Sainsbury's vouchers would be very helpful for preparing for a date and could better facilitate people meeting for the first or second time.

Q10 Would you be more likely to meet a date if the dating app or site incentives were promotional exclusive offers (like two for one coffee, two for one cocktails, game for two bowling etc)?

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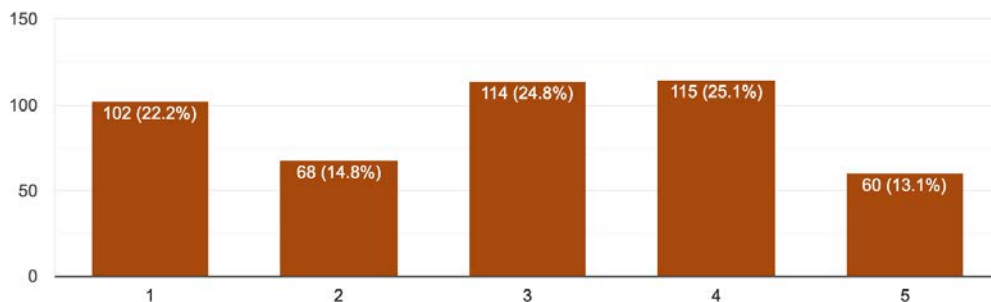
463 responses



Q11 Would you be more likely to use a dating app or site more than others if it offered these incentives within its premium features such as offering two for one coffee, two for one cocktails, game for two bowling etc?

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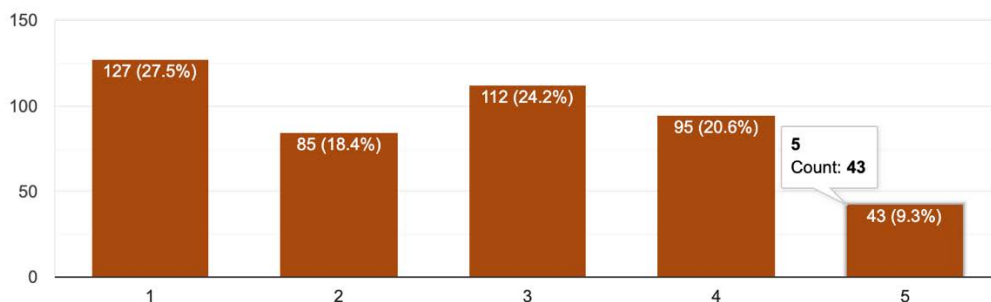
459 responses



Q12 Would you be more likely to pay for an affordable premium subscription if it offered you these incentives like above with the dating app or site?

 Copy

462 responses

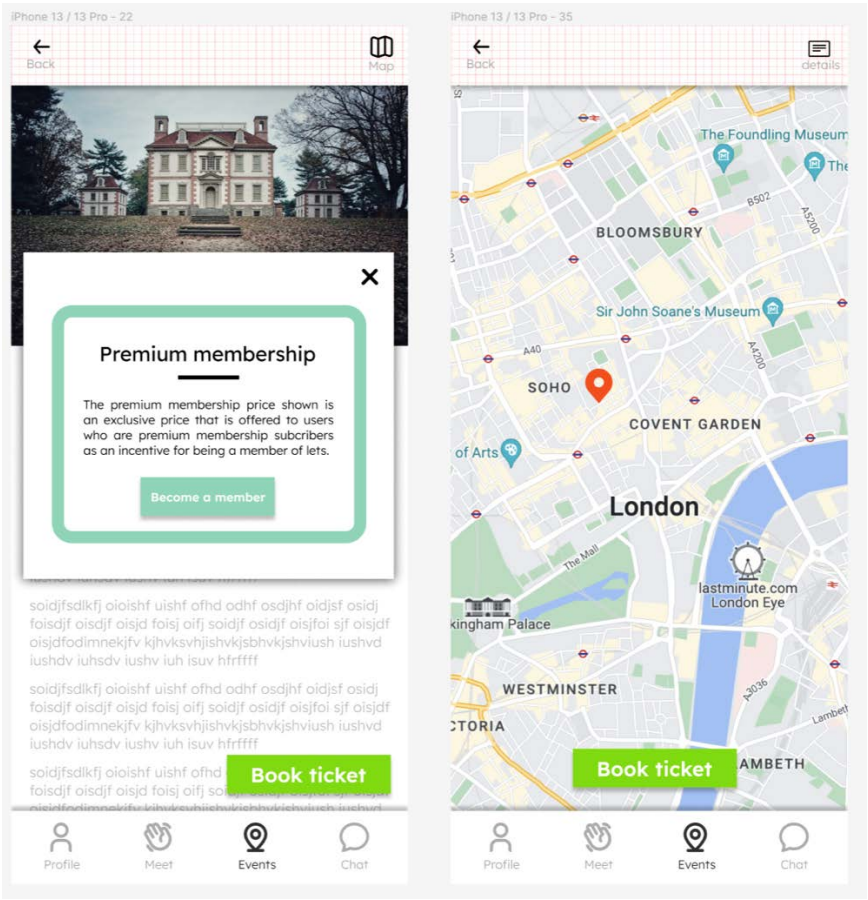


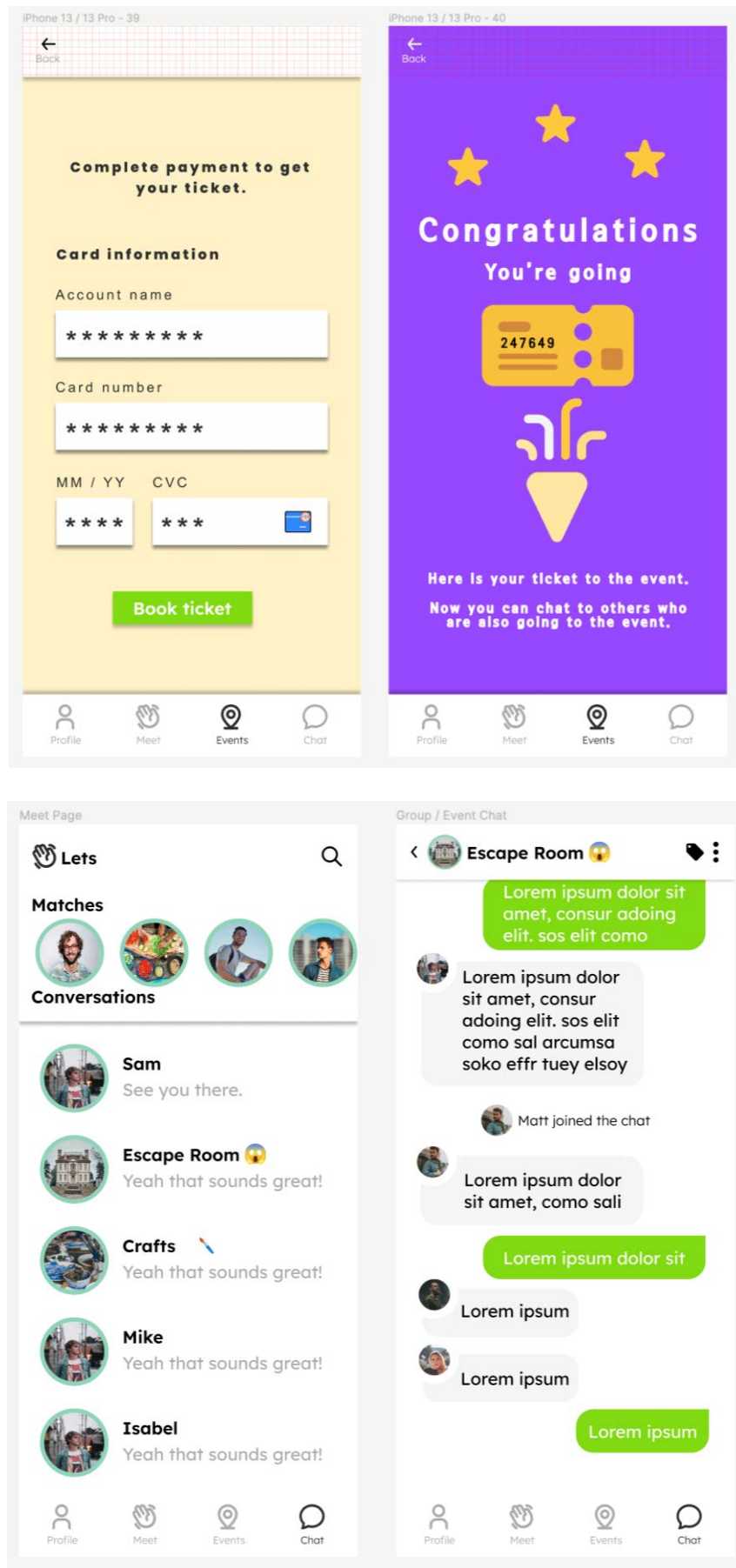
Gantt Chart

Design Sprint Timeline

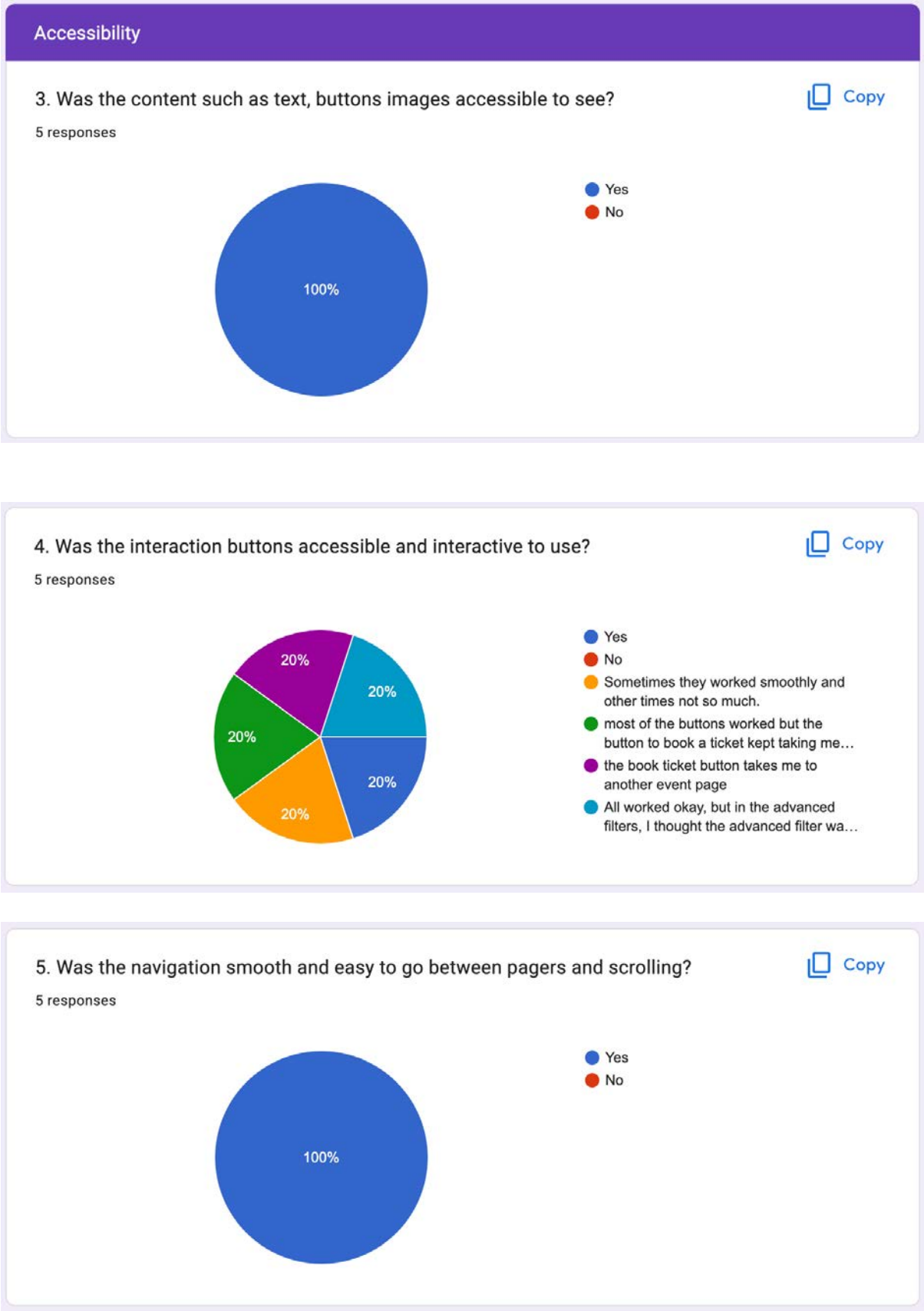
Project Phase																																			
Milestones																																			
Project Exectuion				Research & Development																Decision & Design										Analysis & Evaluation					
				August																September															
Assignment	state	start	finish	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Project Development																																			
Interpretation & analysis of the design sprint and research objectives		16/08/2022	17/08/2022																																
Phase 1 - Mapping																																			
User reseach		16/08/2022	19/08/2022																																
How might we tasks (HMW)		18/08/2022	19/08/2022																																
Target (target user, target journey)		19/08/2022	21/08/2022																																
Phase 1 Evaluation		20/08/2022	21/08/2022																																
Phase 2 - Sketching																																			
Comparison Analysis (Dating apps, other industry apps)		21/08/2022	23/08/2022																																
Conclude Design Solutions		22/08/2022	23/08/2022																																
Sketch design(s)		23/08/2022	25/08/2022																																
Phase 2 Evaluation		16/08/2022	25/08/2022																																
Phase 3 - Decision																																			
Evaluate design solutions		16/08/2022	17/08/2022																																
Decide on sketch design		16/08/2022	17/08/2022																																
Phase 3 Evaluation		16/08/2022	17/08/2022																																
Phase 4 - Prototype																																			
Design UI components		28/08/2022	09/09/2022																																
Design UI layout & IxD		16/08/2022	09/09/2022																																
Link prototype to frame		16/08/2022	10/09/2022																																
Self Testing, evaluating, adjusting changes		27/08/2022	10/09/2022																																
Phase 4 Evaluation		27/08/2022	10/09/2022																																
Phase 5 - Testing																																			
Construct interview & survey questions		11/09/2022	12/09/2022																																
Conduct test in Interview & survey		12/09/2022	13/09/2022																																
Phase 5 Evaluation		13/09/2022	16/09/2022																																
Design Sprint Evaluation		11/09/2022	02/09/2022																																
Agile Evaluation at each phase of the Design Sprint		16/08/2022	15/09/2022																																
Design Sprint Conclusion		09/09/2022	16/09/2022																																

Prototype





User testing results

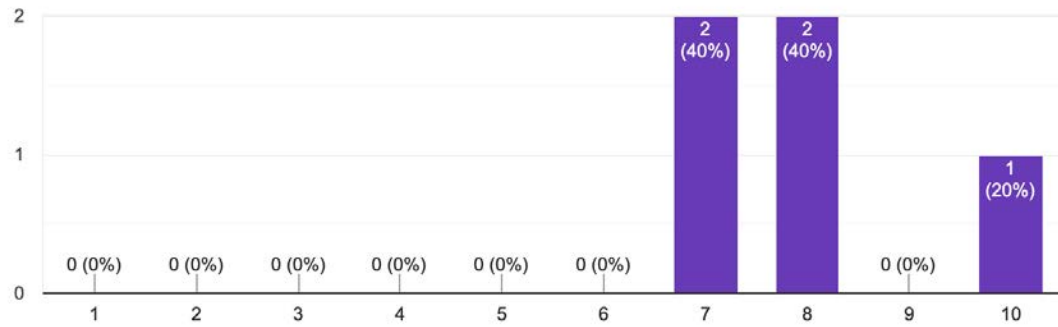


Rating

6. How much do you think the events feature would enhance a users experience in a dating app?

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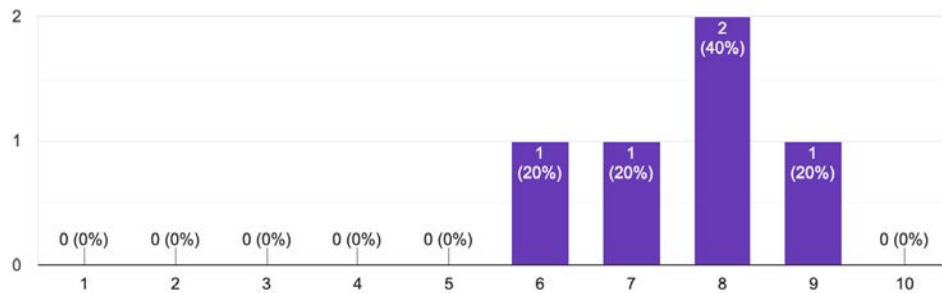
5 responses



7. How much do you think the event group chats would enhance a users experience in a dating app?

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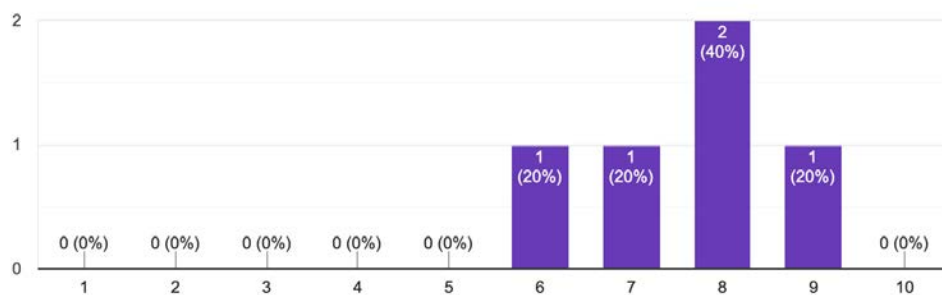
5 responses



8. How much do you think the type of advanced filters would enhance your user experience?

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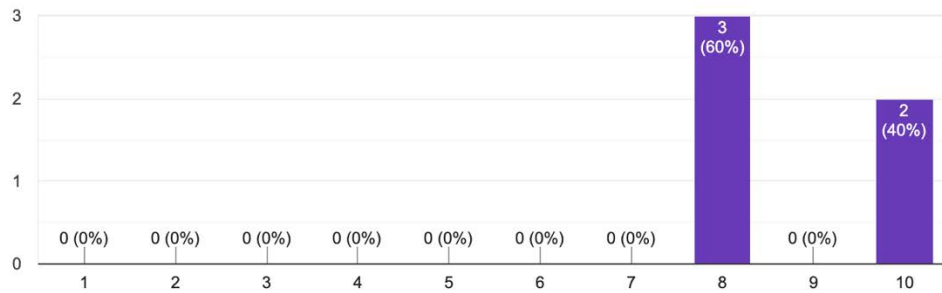
5 responses



9. How likely would you use this dating app over another dating app?



5 responses



Overall experience

10. From your experience with the prototype, was there anything you thought worked well?

5 responses

Ease of use.

Interface, design layout very clear.

I like the menu and be able to interact with the filters and like that there were filter sections of different interest.

I think having events is a good idea

I liked the ideas of the chat, the advanced filters and events and some of the visual layout and interaction.

11. From your experience with the prototype was there anything you thought did not work well?

5 responses

It was unclear that the advanced filters were below the heading. I thought that the heading advanced filters was a button.

Buy out function

had a bit of a struggle with the scrolling down the events page and button to book didnt work.

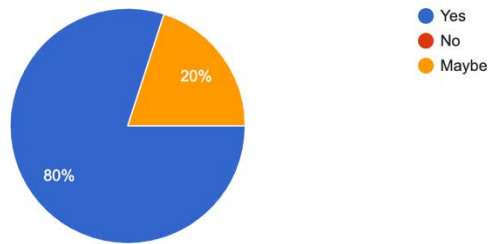
the buttons not working properly

some of the interaction when clicking to book ticket, but that is understanding the fault lies with the prototype and would not be part of a real app and also the look of text that looks looks button.

12. Do you think the concept of events or incentives for singles like group activities or for two would encourage you to meet?



5 responses



13. Are there any recommendations or suggestion you would like to add for further improvement in the future?

4 responses

n/a

Im not sure really, the idea of having events or activities is really good and would definitely use an app if it had that. Having a chat function to chat to the other people who are going is a good idea but wouldn't be something i would use much as I would just go to the event.

like the idea if events and chatting to other people who are going is good as I get nervous in new situations and knowing someone whos going makes it easier for me to go

the look of text that looks looks button try not to lead confusion with the user