Online Dating Services – Chronology and Key Features
Comparison with Traditional Dating

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ABSTRACT

Online dating services have become increasingly and widely used for large mix of populations. Despite numerous stigmas attached to the people who are seeking such dating services, these kind of online dating services –it seems- are here to stay. The number of people who are seeking these services is on the rise, and the figure for businesses and web sites that open for this purpose is increasing as well. But how did we get into this state of web sites and how does it compare with old time traditional dating. This paper gives perspectives on these kinds of dating services and provides a comparison to what used to be practiced before (we call it here traditional dating services). The paper starts by giving an introduction and a brief history of online dating services. It then delves more into the different categories of these services, their key features, and then it tabulates these key features with what used to be offered in old style traditional dating.

Keywords: Online dating services, Dating online, Tabulation of online dating service, Categories of online dating service

INTRODUCTION

Dating online has emerged lately to be a popular tool for meeting other people online and to establish a relationship (Orr, 2004). This kind of business has experienced substantial growth in terms of the profits that they are generating, in terms of the membership and the people who are using it, and also in terms of the number of businesses that are offering these services.

In terms of profits from online dating services, Mitchell (2009) provides evidence of the extensive growth of this kind business and states that online dating web sites constitute the third most profitable kinds of business on the web. The list below shows the most profitable of online business categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Profits (in millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital music</td>
<td>$1,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video games</td>
<td>$1,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dating</td>
<td>$957</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To show the increasing number of people who are using these kinds of services, Gunter (2008) conducted a survey on some 30,000 online respondents in the UK. More than 3800 responded to the survey questions about the extent of their use of online dating services. The following numbers were extracted from this survey:

- 29% said they used online dating services at least once
- 30% spent more than 200 British pounds on dating online
- 70% achieved at least one date
- 43% achieving at least one sexual relationship
- 9% found a marriage partner