

**THE HIDDEN COSTS OF ONLINE DATING IN THE BAY AREA:
\$4,425 JUST TO SEE IF THERE IS CHEMISTRY**

Oakland, CA – (May 2012) --Online Dating is among the fastest growing sectors on the Internet. Dating websites are third in usage, behind only music and video games. (Pornography, surprisingly, has fallen to fourth). The industry is growing 10% annually and the time spent on these dating sites is growing – along with user disappointment and frustration.

“We decided to look directly at the numbers to understand the ‘true cost’ of online dating incurred by our target audience,” says Odette Pollar of Matches That Matter, the new service that introduces small groups of over-40 singles by doing nonprofit, community-based projects together. “With dating industry revenues now in the billions annually, there’s obviously a market out there, but is it money well-spent?”

Members of online sites that offer self-written profiles, spend over 5 hours a week reading profiles and nearly 7 hours a week reading and responding to emails just to get 1.8 hours of offline interactions, according to People are Experience Goods: Improving Online Dating with Virtual Dates published in the Journal of Interactive Marketing. Our proprietary research indicates that it takes 25 first dates and 5 second dates to get one third date; and only after 3 dates will individuals know if there is chemistry and if the relationship should move forward.

So what does this mean financially? Assuming that:

- The process to get to a third date takes 3 months
- The 25 first dates are for coffee and cost \$7 for a pastry and coffee for approximately \$175
- Conservatively the 5 second dates are lunches at an average cost of \$50 that adds \$250 to the food costs.
- 12 hours per week people spent to get to the first date (over the three-month period), at roughly \$28 hourly average for the Bay Area, comes to over \$4,000

The grand total to get to a third date, in the Bay Area, just to see if there is chemistry, is \$4,425. This does not include the online dating monthly membership fees.

“To add insult to injury the satisfaction study in the Journal of Interactive Marketing asked participants to rank the online and offline search activities compared to watching a movie: The movie won! After seeing this statistic combined with these costs, it is obvious that an opportunity for an alternative service exists in an industry that is growing and thriving,” Pollar adds. “I asked myself what type of service could I offer that would be more effective, less expensive and a more realistic alternative for busy people.”

Pollar founded Matches That Matter to provide an economical, expedient and comfortable service to singles over the age of 40. She decided that the only way to honestly assess a potential companion is to see them in a natural environment doing activities they enjoy. "No time spent reading questionable profiles. All you do is show up and be yourself," Pollar said.

Matches That Matter's enrollment process determines your preferences and desires in a little over an hour. Members are then presented with options for activities. 6 men and 6 women, over a three week period spend 8 to 9 hours together. Using the same assumptions as the online dating example above, the total cost for three quality interactions with 11 other compatible singles is less than \$280. Even if you add the one-time membership fee and the cost of activities the total fees remain well under \$500. Pollar says, "The time savings to our busy members is important but the real proof is the size of the smile as they make new friends and meet romantic partners after completing their first set of activities."

For additional information on the affordable Matches That Matter approach, call (510) 496-0040 or (888) 713-7779 or visit www.matchesthatmatter.com.