

Dating Website Interfaces

Joseph Crawley

September 18, 2012

Abstract

For this assignment, Terran Moore and I looked how Match.com, Eharmony.com, and ChristianMingle.com measured in the usability metrics of Learnability, Satisfaction, and Efficiency. For this assignment, we had 5 users create profiles and complete similar tasks in order to measure these metrics.

Contents

1	Learnability	3
1.1	E-harmony.com	3
1.2	Match.com	3
1.3	ChristianMingle.com	3
2	Efficiency	3
2.1	E-harmony.com	3
2.2	Match.com	3
2.3	ChristianMingle.com	3
3	Satisfaction	3
3.1	E-harmony.com	3
3.2	Match.com	3
3.3	ChristianMingle.com	4
4	Expectations of Dating Interfaces	4
4.1	"Designers should make every attempt to reduce the users workload by taking advantage of the computers capabilities."	4
4.1.1	E-harmony.com	4
4.1.2	Match.com	5
4.1.3	ChristianMingle.com	5

1 Learnability

1.1 E-harmony.com

Users were able to fill out profiles almost instantly. Searching was hard to understand and users became frustrated with the searching of the system.

1.2 Match.com

Menus were easy to understand and users could fill out profiles almost instantly. The searching function was easy to pick up on for users, and users could navigate the site with ease.

1.3 ChristianMingle.com

The site was very simple and easy to understand. Menus were clearly marked, and everything was labeled very quickly.

2 Efficiency

2.1 E-harmony.com

E-harmony was efficient on every test except for search ability, which it tested very poorly in. Its search ability was foreign to users who were familiar with networking sites and caused users to be frustrated.

2.2 Match.com

Match.com was very intuitive to users for all aspects. Users felt that they could navigate the site quickly and efficiently with little errors and with a low learning curve.

2.3 ChristianMingle.com

Users liked how simple ChristianMingle.com was. They felt that the simplicity helped them navigate the site easily. The only thing that was not simple was updating profile information, which took users a few more clicks than necessary.

3 Satisfaction

3.1 E-harmony.com

Users felt this site was very good for something, but bad for dating itself. Users felt that it was next to impossible and very timely to connect with matches. Users had low satisfaction with the site.

3.2 Match.com

Users felt that this was the preferred choice in dating websites. It combined the comprehensiveness of E-harmony with the comprehensiveness of Match.com. Users were happy with how quick they picked up the site and how natural the interface was.

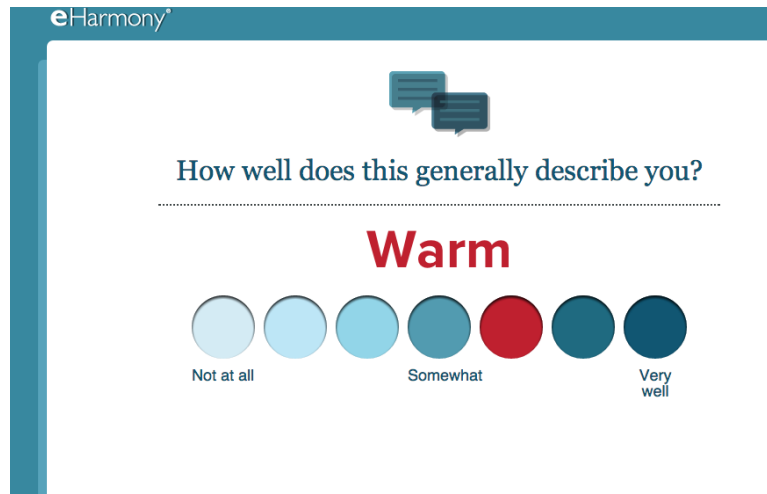


Figure 1: E-Harmony personality questions

3.3 ChristianMingle.com

Users felt Christian Mingle was easy to use, but too simple. Users did not feel that the creating a profile interface was comprehensive enough. Although the menus were simple, they felt that the actions they wanted to take were not always available in the menus.

4 Expectations of Dating Interfaces

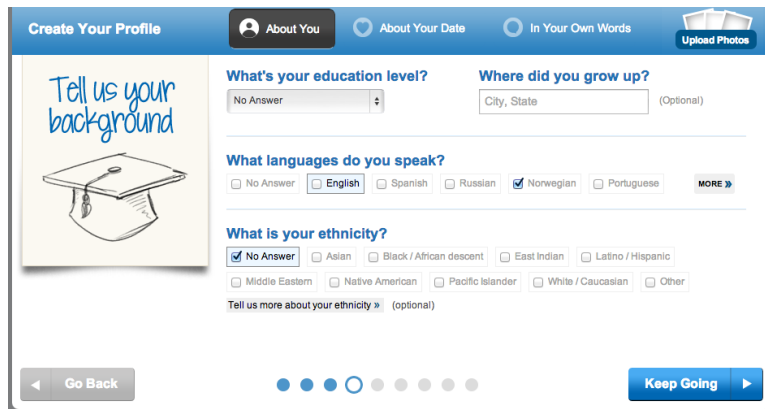
For our report, we could not find any specific reference or guide specific to dating websites, so we used the government usability guidelines. The below sections will contain excerpts from usability.gov, and how they are seen on the dating websites.

4.1 "Designers should make every attempt to reduce the users workload by taking advantage of the computers capabilities."

Since dating websites often require a lot of input when making a profile, dating websites should have efficient ways to enter data and also vary in data entry style so that the user does not become bored.

4.1.1 E-harmony.com

When filling out a profile on E-harmony, the user is asked a series of personality questions. Almost all of the questions were in the format as seen in Figure 1. The users in our tests often felt that they were bombarded with questions. The E-harmony questionnaire was the longest, therefore took our users the longest to fill out. Our users were frustrated with the amount of questions, and since most of the questions were in the same format, our users were bored and began to answer questions quickly and less efficiently. E-harmony could change the style of how they ask questions after every few responses.



The screenshot shows a 'Create Your Profile' form on Match.com. The form is divided into several sections with different input types:

- Header:** 'Create Your Profile' button, navigation links 'About You', 'About Your Date', 'In Your Own Words', and an 'Upload Photos' button.
- Left Panel:** A graphic with the text 'Tell us your background' and an illustration of a graduation cap.
- Questions:**
 - What's your education level?** A dropdown menu with 'No Answer' selected.
 - Where did you grow up?** A text input field for 'City, State' with '(Optional)' next to it.
 - What languages do you speak?** Radio buttons for 'No Answer', 'English', 'Spanish', 'Russian', 'Norwegian' (checked), and 'Portuguese'. A 'MORE >' link is at the end.
 - What is your ethnicity?** Radio buttons for 'No Answer' (checked), 'Asian', 'Black / African descent', 'East Indian', 'Latino / Hispanic', 'Middle Eastern', 'Native American', 'Pacific Islander', 'White / Caucasian', and 'Other'. A link 'Tell us more about your ethnicity >' (optional) is below.
- Footer:** 'Go Back' button, a progress indicator with 7 dots (the 4th dot is active), and a 'Keep Going' button.

Figure 2: Match.com personality questions

4.1.2 Match.com

Match.com does a good job of asking question multiple ways. Like Figure 2, there are 4-7 questions on a page, and there are multiple ways to submit input on this page. This kept users on their toes and stopped users from blindly answering questions. The only drawback to this interface is that the users spent more time per question than they did with E-Harmony. Users had to adjust answering in different ways, which made the questionnaire take more time.

4.1.3 ChristianMingle.com

Just like E-Harmony, Christian Mingle only used one type of input submission for its questions. However, Christian Mingle had a lot fewer questions than E-Harmony, so the user never had the opportunity to be bored by reading questions. The only concern with the question form was that there was no way to change answers if mistakes were made. Besides that, questions were easy to answer and process.

ChristianMingle.com

Find God's Match for You®

<<Previous

Check out your progress

What is your ethnicity?

African

Asian

Black / African descent

Caribbean

Caucasian / White

East Indian

Hispanic / Latino

Middle Eastern

Native American

Pacific Islands

NEXT






Figure 3: ChristianMingle.com personality question page