

Hinge

Research Report

Background

Hinge is a dating app built on the belief that anyone looking for love should be able to find it. It emphasizes meaningful, long-term connections between users, and want to make dating effective, not addictive. Hinge doesn't measure success based on time spent on the app, but rather by the number of dates they can set up. Fittingly so, their tagline is *The dating app designed to be deleted.*TM

Objective

- To design a new feature for the Hinge App that will increase the number of dates that users go on

Research Goal

- To learn about attitudes of users towards online dating
- To learn about the behaviour of users when using Hinge
- To learn about the process of date planning on Hinge
- To learn about the obstacles of date planning on Hinge

Methodologies

Secondary Research

Market Research

- Look at articles, statistics, and studies on trends and best practices in the field of dating apps

Brand Audit

- Learn about the brand culture & philosophy, and any publicly available data

Competitor Analysis

- Matrix that compares what competitor apps provide in their features and user experience

Primary Research

Survey

- To gather quantitative data on user attitudes & behaviour

Reddit Post

- Post questions on the HingeApp subreddit to get both quantitative & qualitative data

Remote User Interviews

- Interview to gather qualitative data on user attitudes & behaviour

Screening Requirements

Survey

- People who have or is using Hinge and have gone on at least 1 date from the app in the past 6 months
- Minimum sample size of 25

Reddit Post

- Anybody who frequent the HingeApp subreddit
- Need to keep in mind that responses will likely skew primarily male

Remote User Interviews

- People aged 25-35 who are currently using hinge, looking for a relationship, and have gone on at least 1 date in the past 3 months
- 6 Participants in total

Key Insights

Taking the data from both my quantitative research (survey) and my qualitative research (interviews + reddit post), I consolidated my key findings:

- 1. LOOKING FOR LOVE: 75% of Hinge users want long term relationships, and the rest are open to both long-term or casual dating.** All Hinge users want to make meaningful

connections, regardless if it leads to a long-term relationship or not, and none are interested in hook-ups.

- 2. RANKING MATCHES: When Hinge users are talking to multiple matches at the same time, there is usually a hierarchy of who they will give more time and energy to.** This is based on comparing their matches' conversation, physical attraction, common interests and values. On average, most users are talking to 2-4 people at any given time.

"There's always a mental ranking in my of my matches - gold, silver, bronze... Gold usually gets all the attention."

- 3. MORE DATES PLEASE: The frequency of dates that users go on vary drastically from user to user, and is dependant on many external factors.** This can range anywhere from multiple dates a week, to less than 1 date a year. Users tend to have "waves" of activity and inactivity on the app, depending on the season & weather, their schedule, major life changes, and dating burnout. With this in mind, 57% of Hinge users still say that they wish they went on more dates.

- 4. KEEP IT ON THE APP: Roughly 50% of dates are planned on Hinge, and the rest are planned off the app.** However, most users will still mention wanting to meet up on the app, and move to a different platform to plan and finalize the date. Opinions vary - Some users prefer to move to another platform as it feels more personal; other users prefer to be private and keep conversation on the app until they feel comfortable sharing their information.

- 5. LET'S TAKE THIS OFFLINE: The longer users chat without meeting up, the more likely for someone to lose interest and the conversation to die out.** However, if a date is initiated too early, users may feel reluctant to accept due to not knowing their match well enough. 57% of Hinge users will message for 4-7 days before planning a date. 21% will message for 1-2 weeks, and 14% will message for less than 4 days.

"I tend to ask them on a date if I feel like online conversation might stagnate soon."

"I'd rather do an in person date than play thunderthumbs."

"[After 3 days] You run out of stuff to talk about, it's just going to be stale so might as well meet up"

“I don’t go out with a guy until we’ve established a bit more rapport and I see potential for chemistry... I need to know first if it’s worth my time.”

“I have a really short attention span and I lose interest pretty quickly sometimes”

“Texting on dating apps is so different from texting your friends... There is no commitment. You can text something and if your schedule is different than theirs, they can respond days later. It can be super slow and sometimes it fizzles out”

- 6. FOOD (OR DRINKS) FOR THOUGHT: Most Hinge users will go to somewhere casual & low-commitment for first dates, which usually involve food and/or drinks.** These places are always public and include; bars, breweries, happy hour, dinner, coffee, lunch, brunch, beach/parks, a walk, etc. Users noted that common interests (especially in food and drink) make it much easier to plan a date that both people will enjoy.

“I pick something that fits into our conversation somewhere and build off that and turn it into a date.”

“Through texting and asking questions, I try to find enough common interests to actually set up a date and meet up”

“Ideally I try to come up with something related to something they mentioned, like one person mentioned liking Scrabble so I suggested a board game cafe.”

“Where we go depends on what I’m craving and what they’re open to having”

- 7. CONVENIENCE FIRST: Convenient location and timing is very important for users when planning the first date.** The area must be easy for both people to get to, and transit-accessible if users don’t drive. Scheduling a time can be tricky for people who are busy and have different work or school schedules, or live farther away from the city.

“What fails the date setup for me would be bad timing. Most guys in my current area are in the oil field industry: working long hours, multi-week with few irregular day-offs...”

*“Scheduling can be a drag, and general game playing... [It’s frustrating when] people say when they’re **not** available but not when they **are** available”*

“I tend to suggest and accept stuff based on convenience first (regarding location and time)”

“Where I’m living vs. where they’re living, I pick somewhere in the middle”

“There was one guy with the weirdest schedule, and we were trying to figure out a time, and it never ended up happening”

“We decided on going somewhere in the middle of both our locations”

- 8. TRADITIONAL GENDER NORMS: In heterosexual relationships, it is usually expected that men will ask the woman out.** While many strides have been made towards gender equality, dating is a space where gender norms still exist. Men feel like the pressure is placed on them to do the asking out, and women feel reluctant to ask someone out in fear of looking desperate or “coming on too strong”. The fear of deviating from this societal norm is a strong motivator of users’ behaviours.

M: “I normally initiate the date. I’m a guy, and I feel like the onus is normally put on us (whether fair or not)”

M: “I’ve personally never had a woman set up the date, in my experience unless I ask it wouldn’t happen. It just seems that woman naturally expect it from men and the conversation would just go on forever or fizzle out if i didn’t ask, so it always adds pressure to my side of the conversation.”

F: “As a female I usually wait for the guy to initiate something.”

F: “If I suggest meeting and the conversation doesn’t go right to planning, I let it fade.”

F: “I would hint at wanting to meet up, I would throw an idea out there, see if they pick up on it.”