

By Emily Waltz
& James T. Bee



Pupp-E-Love

Hundreds of hounds hook up hourly, here on Pupp-E-Love
Join the pack today!



Pupp-E-Love makes no guarantees regarding ultimate compatibility with individuals you meet through this service.
Do not provide other members with any information relating to your doggy treat savings.
Pupp-E-love is not responsible for damages to kennels, leads and bowls.
Don't catch rabies. Practice safe love.



Birds do it, bees do it; how hard can it be? With the high importance Chinese society places on getting hitched, the impulse (or the pressure) to settle down leads to “near-universal” rates of marriage; reportedly a hard-to-believe 98 percent. Yet finding your one true love in the Middle Kingdom is slightly more difficult than it is for birds and bees. For starters, Chinese face the narrowly defined appropriate dating window. High school is too soon; don’t even think about it! Thirty is of course much too late. This leaves college and right after graduation; the only suitable time to find a mate. It is not about dating around, meeting new people, or having flings; this is serious business. Those who are “too picky” will die alone, or worse still, without giving their parents grandchildren. The traditional approach allows no dallying.

Add to that a very low tolerance for non-standard partnerships, a ticking clock that starts beeping in one’s mid-twenties and smoking at 30, a skewed gender ratio, and the often-cited home-ownership prerequisites in the midst of a big-city housing bubble; and finding a mate, let alone love, seems highly improbable.

For those who left the village to live, work or study in the big city, it is often the case that networks of relations back in the hometown no longer suffice to tap into pools of compatible matches. Neither is the danwei (work unit) around to step in and offer up a suitable match.

In each of urban China’s endless cement block apartments, hundreds of people move around inside insular worlds just feet from one other, often without ever meeting. It is the setting for a rom-com or a tragic drama, and points to how difficult it can be, especially for the transplanted and networkless, to meet new friends and potential partners. So what are lonely hearts to do in the big city?

Love is on the Line

Jiayuan (“Beautiful Destiny”), Baihe (“Lily”), and Zhenai (“Cherished Love”) are the biggest names in the online dating business in China; versions of older, in-person matchmaking agencies gone online, with marriage being the end game. Acting as a bridge between brick-and-mortar agency and internet platforms, they offer offline events and one-on-one help.

Founded in 2003, Jiayuan leads the pack. Its website advertises “trusted, effective, and user focused” services for addressing “the dating and marriage needs of China’s rapidly growing urban singles population.” A press release at the end of June announced 110 million registered users, while the website adds there are “tens of thousands of new users signing up daily”. But how exactly have they managed to dominate the looking-for-love market in China?

On Jiayuan, browsing comes at no cost, but messages cost ¥2 for the first “stamp”, after which all subsequent interactions between two users are free. This is a low-priced model designed with mass-market appeal; the price of a Beijing subway ticket for a shot at true love. The company also makes money on premium services, including monthly subscription options, and personalized help from staff. For a select “VIP” clientele, these 21st century matchmakers will even hunt through different cities and provinces to find suitable “companions.”

The same press release claimed 12.3 million successful matches as of 2014, but did not note the definition of success in this scenario. They see China’s online dating market as still in its early stages. Jiayuan, after all, is ten years younger than Match.com, and predictions for industry growth are rosy. Still, for the traditional dating site it may be over before it has begun.

Statements from company leaders, website information and advertisements all betray the focus on marriage, revealing a discouraging attitude towards casual daters. In 2010 Jiayuan started a wedding planning company, Xique, in line with its dating-for-marriage policy. But a growing number of younger users are falling through this dating website’s net. For those interested in more casual exchanges instead of matchmaking, Jiayuan is simply irrelevant.

hAPPY Hunting

To this new demographic, the app is the new black. Location-based apps, in contrast to the detailed, online dating profiles and weeks of exchanging lengthy messages, are easy, free, and low-commitment; targeting young people who spend all of their time staring at their portable devices anyway.

The Wall Street Journal noted that for this reason, the whole start-up industry is leaning to-



- My Kennel
- My Blog**
- My Profile
- My Settings

Status Updates

- SAMMY**
I'm gonna wrap myself around you...
- HENRY**
So Celine Dion walks into a bar...
- CHRIS**
Show me that lovely toothy smile...
- EDDY**
Are you ready to be swept off your feet?...
- TERESA**
Need someone to bring me out of my shell...
- ROGER**
Er, what's up, Doc?
- DOLLY**
On vacation in the Baaaaaa-hamas...
- TOM**
What's new, pussycat? Whoosh-whoosh...
- DRACO**
Let me light up your life...
- JAWS**
Plenty more fish in the sea...
- T-REX**
You scratch my back...
- POLLY**
Pining for the fjords...
- PONGO**
I spotted you across the room...
- ABU**
Your eyes sparkle like diamonds...
- YODA**
Unleash what you have learned...
- SPEEDY**
Let's just take things slow...
- MICKEY**
It's a magical world...
- DUMBO**
I see me running through that open door...
- SIMBA**
Can you feel the love tonight?...

ward smartphones: "The new generation of startups is heavy on smartphone apps that cater to young Chinese, for whom smartphones are the primary form of entertainment, instead of televisions or computers." It only seems natural that dating platforms should follow suit.

Enter Momo

"Momo is a fun way to discover, chat and engage with new people and communities near you" announces the Momo Company Website to the world.

Momo (tagline: "hello, stranger") crests the new wave of location-based chatting apps. Reporting over 130 million users, it has long outstripped similar startups like the Shanghai-based Youjia, with its plethora of virtual goods for purchase, and Mojing, a face-recognition app that pairs users' photos based on a mysterious algorithm of suitability.

Not to be confused with Himalayan dumplings or the Italian design company, "Momo" is written 陌陌, a double-hit of the character for "raised path" and part of the word for stranger that also shows up in 陌路相逢, or "strangers meeting".

The app, available for iOS and Android, allows members to share texts, photos, voice messages, and play games with other users. Though it faces competition from Tencent giant WeChat, which has its own "find nearby" and "shake" features, Momo has so far carved out a niche for itself.

Shady Business

Who is on Momo? Lots of people looking to meet up. And a few people of questionable morals. In a land where there always seems to be a campaign going, 2014 is the year of cleaning up the Internet (read tightening the government's hold). Launched in April, the campaign has already hit several companies hard, including major web portal Sina, doling out punitive measures, confiscating servers and revoking licenses.

Elsewhere, state news agency Xinhua ran an article lambasting Momo as a "mobile base" for illegal behaviour, accusing it of spawning a large number of assaults, scams, and other crimes, and stating concern over minors accessing explicit material via mobile social software. The article quotes the VP of a prep school encouraging parents not to buy smart devices for their kids for this reason.

Momo spokespersons responded that their company takes these concerns seriously and plans to increase content monitoring staff from 60 to 100, while also voicing a politically-correct hope that it will grow with its users; that older couples with kids might use the platform to befriend other families in their neighbourhoods.

Unstoppable

Such a slightly salacious reputation, though, does not seem to have put a stop to the mobile platform's march to success. Though Momo's own claims put the number of users well past

the hundred-million mark, the active members may only be a quarter of that figure. Even so, estimates of the company's worth are floating around US\$2 billion, a figure quadrupled from 18 months prior. All this from a mere start-up; a small collective of Beijingers who launched the app back in 2011 and made waves recently with rumors of a US initial public offering, predicted for later this year.


Back to Basics

Recognizing where the game may be headed, and that decreasing traffic may have a lot to do with mobile platforms edging in on their game, Jiayuan is attempting to amp up its mobile interface. While their high reports of registered members may conceal a dwindling number of active users, the company estimates some 25 million people are mobile users.


While some have called it a crisis in the online dating industry, Jiayuan CEO, Linguang Wu was quoted as saying, "Looking to the future, we will continue to build upon this massive database of marriage-minded singles." He spoke of the traditional matchmaking business in China, calling it "poised for a period of explosive growth."

For its part, Baihe came out with an ad that sparked an uproar this February. Timed for the Lunar New Year, when many singles feel the pressure to bring home a significant other, the video featured a concerned grandmother asking her young and pretty granddaughter over and over when she was going to get married. Enter Baihe. A few short seconds later, and she turns up at her grandmother's sickbed wearing a white wedding dress. The tagline: "Because of love, do not wait."

While non-traditional ways of finding one's true love are constantly increasing, big-city "marriage markets" have disappeared. Not confident with leaving their children's futures up to fate and smartphones, parents still crowd public parks, hanging paper profiles from trees and scanning for potential matches based on height, income, birth year, and location. The right match will save their offspring from eternal singledom and get them to settle down before it is too late.


The kids walking by on the sidewalk flipping through their smartphones have other ideas about finding their next date. And they have an app for it. 

*"Together we share,
care and enjoy"*




<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baby group Book club Bazaar Cards and mah-jong Chinese culture lessons Spring Garden Party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gala Ball Cooking classes Explorer walks Monthly dinners Children's parties Nordic Walking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas benefit concerts Hail and farewell parties Pearls and stones Pins and needles Trips around China Welcome BBQs
---	---	--

Join



www.nanjinginternationalclub.org

KULLEI



Tattoo Studio

南京市新街口户部街天之都大厦 2926
HUBU ST. #33, TIANZHIDU, NO. 2926, XINJIEKOU-NANJING
15651986272