

Jewish Dating Online!

“Find your true love in cyberspace, on the world wide web... All you need is a mouse, and Frumster.com!”



It's raining buckets outside. But still, you meet her at midnight. You're munching popcorn; she's eating her way through a tub of B & J. You share your inner thoughts, observant outlook and aspirations with one another. The date went well, and your clothes remained dry. Welcome to the online world of observant Jewish dating!

Internet dating has caught on like wildfire amongst the observant and marriage-minded traditional single crowd. What has become the leader in online dating for marriage-minded Jews, Frumster.com is one of the most successful online Jewish dating services of its ilk.

In just three years, Frumster has boasted more than 360 married members. From New York to London, Bnei-Brak to Johannesburg, Frumster marriages have crossed many continents, observance levels, and ages.

“Frumster enables members to gauge more of an in-depth perspective of an individual through meaningful communication,” says Derek Saker, Director of Marketing at Frumster.com. The site, with currently over 16,000 members, touts itself as a virtual meeting place for singles that span the religious spectrum.

One such match involved Simcha, a young chap from England, and his wife Suri, from Israel. “I’ve always hated singles weekends, and I am very weary of shadchanim (*Jewish matchmakers*). I highly recommend trying to meet someone over the Internet,” says Suri. “It’s much less stressful than blind dating, and it is also a much easier way to meet. This is so much simpler, and the best part is, if you really meet a creepy guy, you can get rid of him with just a click of a mouse!”

How did this woman find her Bashert (*destined partner*) in an already complex and frustrating dating scene? One of her co-workers nudged her for two months to register on Frumster.com, and despite Suri’s hesitations, she gave it a whirl. “I had felt that using the Internet to meet a guy was somewhat shady. But, what had I to lose? And if I really found it inappropriate, I could just terminate the service,” she says.

After chatting online with Simcha, and thoroughly checking him out through ‘Jewish geography’, she gave him her phone number, and they hit it off. Simcha and Suri have been married for almost two years and Suri still can’t believe how it happened: “I mean, what are the chances of two nice good, frum people meeting over

the Internet and actually getting married, especially when they live in two different countries?” In this case, pretty good.

Suri and Simcha’s experiences aren’t atypical. In fact, while Frumster is based in North America, the U.K. forms the fourth largest membership base, and already a high number of U.K. connected Frumster Marriages have resulted!

While some have been matches where both parties resided in England, there have been many like Suri and Simcha, where one party was abroad.

Interestingly, Saker says that with almost all North America-U.K. matches, the couple have settled in the United States. Saker says that many European singles are very receptive to moving to the U.S, should they find their Bashert is North American. “Europeans are attracted to a country which is blessed with many vibrant and diverse Orthodox communities, where work opportunities are good, where the general Jewish community is powerful and influential, and where the national government is extremely supportive of Israel.”

Key to Frumster’s success, says Derek Saker, is a very personalized service which includes online support, dating advice from Batya Ben Ze’ev (MSW), and rigorous screening by a dedicated full-time management team.

According to Saker, users are attracted to insightful profiles and the quality pool of sincere singles who are serious in their search to find their Bashert.

Saker says that observant singles importantly seek to meet others of similar religious outlook. In response to this, and an increasing demand from traditional Jews, Frumster has created a separate category of “Traditional & Growing” catering to Jews who have a strong Jewish identity, seriously seek to get married, but do not necessarily fully keep kosher or Shabbat .

The differences between religious and secular online dating are many, says Saker. On other sites, people may be looking for mere friendship, a girl or boyfriend. Religious backgrounds aren’t necessarily important. Profilees’ photos are ‘anything goes’-type of pictures, often the more ‘suggestive’, the better. But on Frumster the users are practicing Jews interested in dating for marriage. What weighs heavily are shared religious outlook and observance growth level.

Saker says he hopes to make it easier for observant and traditional, marriage-minded Jews to find their intended. For Jewish singles, finding that perfect mate within the tribe is a challenge. For religious Jews especially - who comprise about ten percent of the Jewish population- the search can become that much more daunting. Despite the challenges, about 14 Frumster members find their Bashert each month!

Derek Saker, originally from South Africa, lived in Golders Green for many years. He now lives in Passaic, NJ with his wife and three children.

