

# Love in the Time of the Coronavirus: Dating Apps Are Growing and Becoming More Virtual

## ARTICLE |

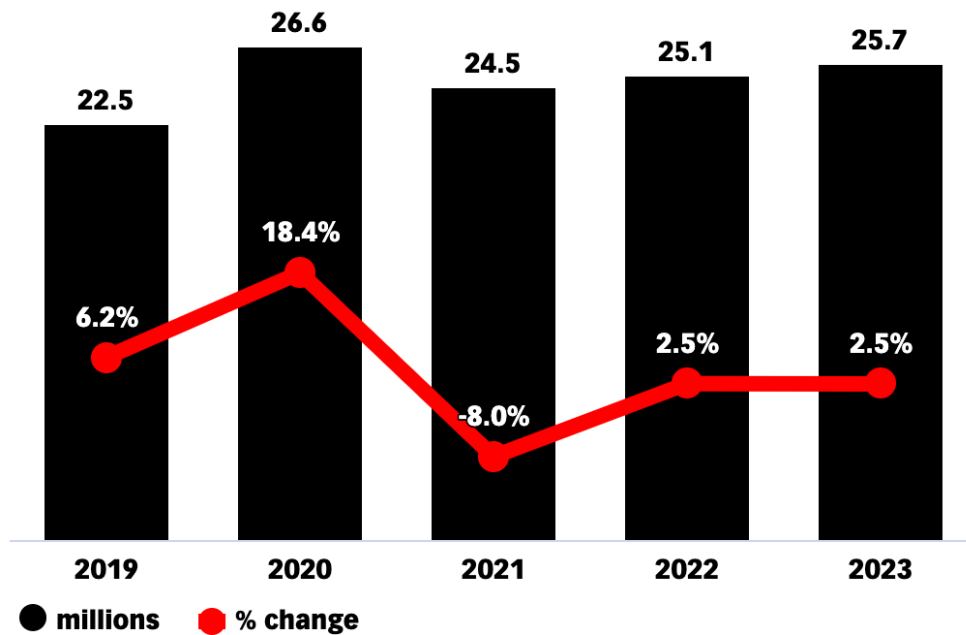
**Rimma Kats**

Dating apps are seeing an influx of new users as many Americans continue to shelter in place.

We forecast the number of smartphone dating app users in the US will reach 26.6 million this year. That's an 18.4% increase from 2019.

## Smartphone Dating App Users

US, 2019-2023



Source: eMarketer, June 2020

[www.eMarketer.com](http://www.eMarketer.com)

“People still want to find love and connection during these trying times,” said Vincent Yip, eMarketer forecasting analyst at Insider Intelligence. “Since people can’t meet in person, many have adapted to finding someone online.”

Dating apps like Match.com and eHarmony have adjusted their messaging to the current climate. For example, in a recent TV campaign, eHarmony encouraged consumers to virtually meet others, via its app, from the comfort of home.

In its Q2 2020 letter to shareholders, Match Group—whose portfolio includes Tinder, Match.com, OkCupid and Hinge—reported a surge in usage across demographic groups. “Usage levels for younger users and females remain above pre-COVID levels, although not as dramatic as at the height of the pandemic-related lockdowns in March and April,” Shar Dubey, CEO of Match Group, said in the letter.

“Additionally, usage among older demographics and males, which

initially declined with the onset of the pandemic, has recovered and is now above pre-COVID levels.”

The average number of subscribers grew 11% to 10.1 million, up from 9.1 million last year, according to Match Group’s Q2 2020 results, announced earlier this month.

Dating apps began to see a lot more activity at the start of the pandemic. In an April 2020 survey from The Harris Poll, US adults said they were more frequently using social media (50%), virtual meeting sites (33%) and dating apps (11%). Morning Consult polling from the same month revealed that 6% of US adults were spending more time on dating apps, while 43% reported no change in usage.

“Total daily messages sent across all of our products and daily average swipes at Tinder are higher today than they were at the end of February,” Duby said in Match Group’s shareholder letter.

Though the pandemic is certainly driving consumers to dating apps, we expect user growth to slightly decrease in 2021 and level off through 2023.

“People crave human connection, and the pandemic has limited that needed interaction,” Yip said. “As we head into 2021, and with the country returning to some normalcy, dating habits should also revert back to pre-COVID times.”