



*Taking the Waiting out of Dating...*TM

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London, UK - October 30th, 2004: Nic Fleming of the Telegraph, the UK's leading quality Newspaper, trials 3G Video Dating.

Telegraph

Video dating can be great but you have to find the right signals

By Nic Fleming

I take special care over my morning shave. Whistling, I splash on some expensive aftershave and iron my favourite shirt. Surely I have a comb somewhere.

I am not normally big on beautification but, after all, I do have dates with three women in the next few hours. It is only halfway through polishing my shoes that I realise how superfluous that is because I am going video mobile phone dating.

This involves two people chatting and perhaps flirting while watching live footage of each other on the screens of their mobiles. That is the theory, anyway.

The gods of technology do not smooth my path to Rubika's heart as I travel two miles across east London seeking a video signal. She can't work out how to point the mini video camera at herself while watching me on her screen and I can't hear what she is saying because I can't find the volume control.

Once the gremlins have been banished, I learn that Rubika Balendra, 19, is a vivacious, articulate medical student having a great time at Cambridge University. She wanted to be a scientist but decided she could help more people by being a doctor. Rubika, from south London, thinks that video mobile dating has great potential over texting.

"You get a number from a guy in a club and you text him and it all rests on whether he texts back and how long he takes to answer," she says. "But you can't get emotions across by text or e-mail. I have spent many an evening with girlfriends agonising over the significance of a text full-stop in a particular place or a late reply."



Rubika Balendra 'video
-dating' via 3G phone

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She asks me about my job and even laughs at my attempts at jokes. Then the gremlins return. Rubika's face changes into a series of flashing coloured blocks and her voice becomes alarmingly Dalek-like. Then she is gone.

Over the past few years courtship has changed with bewildering speed, mainly because of new technology. Millions of us are chatting each other up on the internet, flirting by text and picking our partners at speed-dating events. However, internet dating can have its dangers: cuddlyjohn@niceguy.com can sometimes turn out to be homicidal harry@psycho.com. After a two-week trial, 3, the mobile operator, announces today that it will launch Britain's first large scale video mobile dating service.

Edward Brewster, of 3, says: "3G video technology will revolutionise the dating game. Not only do you get to see whether a potential date takes your fancy, you also get to check out their personality. The response to our trial has been phenomenal. It has been so good that we are planning to launch a commercial dating service on 3 in the near future."

Other networks are unlikely to be far behind, especially as they are all seeking exciting new services to persuade us to buy third generation handsets. *The 3G Dating Agency, launched as a trial this year, offers members the chance to send in clips they have recorded on their mobiles and browse other members' clips. It then arranges video dates for those who express interest in each other.*

My date with Yara Khalife does not go well. I thought that opening the call with a shot of a garden gnome was amusing. She looks confused. Yara, a pretty 26-year-old Australian of Lebanese descent, has a lovely smile. I half jokingly tell her that I don't think the video camera flatters me. I do not quite catch her reply because a car goes by but I don't think she was disagreeing. As she is hoping to explore more of Britain, I recommend my Scottish island getaway, a remote place with fascinating history and good bird life. She is not overly impressed. I notice that she is not asking anything about me. The conversation is floundering. Yara does not like the use of text messaging in modern dating. "I get really annoyed when you meet someone and you spend all this time texting and trying to work out what someone really means from a few words. *At least with a video call you can see the person and remember why you decided to give them your number. On a first date that is going badly, you have either to make an excuse and run away or sit through three excruciating hours.*"

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I detect a hint in there somewhere. I'll get my coat. Alice Field, a gorgeous 22-year-old South African, is a free spirit who has no plans other than to go "wherever the wind takes me". She says I am looking confused. I tell her it's because I am squinting into the sun in a failed attempt to present her with my best side. I get a laugh. Alice studied marketing and finance but is thinking of going to the French Alps to seek work. My friend's sister manages a chalet in Morzine and I gain some brownie points by offering to put her in touch. I ask if I can stay in her chalet. She says I can but only if I tip well. We discuss our shared interest in photography. She says I would get more from my macro lens pictures if I developed them myself. Alice's eyes twinkle as she laughs and flicks her hair. It's looking good. Then, a fatal schoolboy error: I admit that she is my third video mobile date of the day. "So you've been cheating on me already?" she says, as I try to work out if she is joking. "Well no, I mean, I, err...", I splutter. Alice is even more attractive when she frowns. Her eyebrows arch as she says sternly: "I'm sorry, it's over. You are dumped."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/10/30/nvid30.xml&Sheet=/news/004/10/30/ixhome.html>

Romi Parmar, CEO of The 3G Dating Agency said: "Having The 3G Dating Agency service profiled in a leading broadsheet newspaper has helped encourage an ever more diverse group of single people to start **Taking the Waiting out of Dating...**"

About the 3G Dating Agency

The 3G Dating Agency is the worlds most advanced global mobile social networking phenomenon that doesn't require subscription and works on any internet enabled mobile phone. Our service is a great way to find new friends or partners for fun, dating and long term relationships and our technology enables us to offer unrivalled levels of safety, convenience and ease of use – thus enabling you to **Take the Waiting out of Dating...**

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