

MONEY SPECIAL: TURN YOUR CLUTTER INTO CASH

ESSENCE

EXCLUSIVE

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**SEXY
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LET'S GET DIGITAL

Spice up your love life one click at a time with options that suit every dating style

BY CHARREAH K. JACKSON

LEVEL 1

FUN FLIRT

Create Your Love Story

Say farewell to *Fifty Shades* and star in your own sexy beach read instead. After you choose your leading man, plot-line and path to seduction, your personalized novel will be created and sent to you. Check out ustarnovels.com or bookbyyou.com to select your adventure starting at \$40. Oh, Idris, we'll meet you between the covers.

LEVEL 3

MASTER DATER

Get Socially Networked

The new Facebook Graph Search helps you find people in your network who share your interests. For example, you can research "Single friends of my friends who live in Chicago & are 28 to 38 years old & who like Spike Lee movies & Kendrick Lamar music." We dare you to reach out to three like-minded men!

LEVEL 2

SAVVY SINGLE

Diversify Your Profiles

Niche Web sites with tailored dating pools—from those for singles raising kids (singleparentmeet.com) to community-minded singles connecting (yourcauseormine.com)—are hot right now; they allow you to fine-tune your search. "I encourage singles to join at least two sites," says Sam Yagan, CEO of Match, Inc., and cofounder of OKCupid. "Try one general site like Match and a niche site based on your interests or demographic."

Explore Erotica

Nudity. Orgasms. Self-pleasure. Fetishes. Oh, yes. *Corset*, the digital sensual magazine, explores every facet of sexuality and offers real-life stories and tips for women to spark your creativity and imagination for your next intimate encounter. "The more connected we are to what we want and what turns us on, the better our relationships and sex lives will be," says founder Arielle Loren. Visit corsetmagazine.com.

Try a Blind Date

The goal of online dating is to meet new people off-line. To increase actual meet-ups, singles site OkCupid launched the free mobile app Crazy Blind Date. You can post when you are available for a date and be matched with a compatible user, or search singles who have already selected a time and place. "My date was a guy I would have walked right past on the street," says Detroit dater Nina Young. "It was a great experience and forced me out of my comfort zone."

Couples Connect

Check out these apps and sites to keep the fire and fun in your relationship:

Upgrade Date Night

Atlanta couple Erika Hill and Trey Anders (right) took turns planning dates, from zip-lining and mini golf to a painting class with cocktails.



After realizing the time it took to find exciting and affordable entertainment, they created greatdatedeals.com to offer couples a good time at a steal. "People spend \$100 on dinner and a movie, and you might have gotten a staycation hotel package for that," Anders says.

Digitize Your Love

Use the app Couple to message and trade thumb kisses, with you and your beau touching each other's thumbprint when it appears on your screen, in real time. Stay connected using the app Kahnoodle, which allows you to give your guy "kudos" when he restocks your body wash, or offer a "koupon" to show him what you learned in pole dancing class at a time of his choosing.

MOUSE: ATOMIC IMAGERY/GETTY IMAGES; COUPLE: HOLLYWOOD SHOT, INC.

