

UX RESEARCH PROJECT



Tinder Engagement & Subscriptions

Analysis of user behavior, emotional drivers, and monetization
opportunities

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Presentation Outline



Background & Methodology

Project context, research objectives, and overview of the participant sample.



Executive Summary

Top-line takeaways covering conversation depth, habits, and premium value perception.



Key Insights & Recs

Deep dive into 7 core insights with supporting data, user quotes, and design solutions.



1. Background & Methodology

Understanding the sample and research

goals



Context & Objectives

Research Context

- ✓ Focus on engagement depth and subscription intentions.
- ✓ Investigating the gap between "matching" and "meaningful conversation."
- ✓ Understanding the "habitual swiper" psychology.

Core Objectives

- ✓ **Retention:** Why do users drift into passive use?
- ✓ **Emotion:** What drives initiation anxiety and fear of ghosting?
- ✓ **Monetization:** How is "premium" perceived vs. what users actually value?

Research Question

- ✓ How do emotional barriers in the messaging process impact user engagement and retention
- ✓ What factors drive the perceived value of premium subscriptions, and how can AI assistance increase their desirability among users?

Research Methodology



Quantitative Survey

Measured user sentiment, feature awareness, subscription intentions, and usage frequency patterns.



Follow-up Interviews

Five in-depth qualitative sessions to uncover emotional drivers and hidden pain points.



Data Analysis

Sorted quantitative data into visible patterns. Synthesized qualitative data into core behavioral themes and actionable design recommendations.

Participant Snapshot

45 Total Participants

38 Current/Recent Users

23 Male
15 Female

GENDER (RECENT USERS)

Orientation Mix: 9 Gay, 26 Straight, 3 Bisexual | Relationship Status: 25 Single, 12 In Relationship, 1 Married

Usage Intensity

Engagement Patterns

- ✓ ~50% of users do not open the app daily.
- ✓ ~44% open 1–10 times/day (Casual checking).
- ✓ Most sessions are short (5–10 mins).
- ✓ **Insight:** Not just power users; many are "casual experimenters" or "mid-level veterans".



2. Executive Summary

Top takeaways and strategic
opportunities

Top Takeaways: Engagement

1. Depth > Breadth

Users strongly agree (4.25/5) that they value deeper topics beyond small talk. The current model optimizes for "matching volume," but users are craving "conversation quality."

So What?

Design for conversation depth (prompts, cards) not just swipe volume.

2. The "Habit Swiper"

A specific segment exists that swipes out of boredom with no intention to message (3.75/5). Roughly half don't open daily, but when they do, it's passive.

So What?

Opportunity to convert habitual swiping into conversations with lightweight nudges.

Top Takeaways: Barriers

3. Initiation Anxiety

Confidence in starting conversations is low (3.1/5). Users are sensitive to ghosting and reply quality. A lot of engagement is lost in the gap between "Match" and "Talk."

So What?

Users need low-stakes openers and "scaffolding" to bridge the gap.

4. Premium Value Gap

Users understand the functional benefits of Gold/Platinum (e.g., unlimited swipes), but emotionally they don't feel compelling (Desirability: 2.44/5).

So What?

Reframe premium value from "More Reach" to "Better Connection" and "Certainty."

5. AI as "Social Co-Pilot"

Interest in AI is moderate but highly targeted (rewriting bios and openers). Those open to AI are also more likely to subscribe. It's viewed as a confidence booster, not a toy.

So What?

Position AI features as confidence or efficiency tools in premium tiers.

Strategic Opportunities

- ✓ **Design for Conversation:** Move beyond "It's a Match!" to structured interaction modes (Deep dive prompts, Shared-interest tags).
- ✓ **Nudge the Habit:** Detect "mindless swiping" and inject friction or gamification ("Start 1 conversation today") to shift behavior.
- ✓ **AI Scaffolding:** Productize AI not as a generator, but as an assistant that helps anxious users draft authentic messages.
- ✓ **Redefine Premium:** Shift the value proposition from "Volume" (Infinite swipes) to "Quality" (Compatibility boosts, "Serious" badges).

3. Key Insights & Recommendations



Detailed analysis of 10 core insights

INSIGHT 1

People crave deeper, more intentional conversations.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"I'm tired of surface-level banter. I want the product to help us get to the 'real' conversation faster."

"If people said my pics were pretty, then I respond and we talk. I need that spark."

"I appreciate playful but specific first messages, not just a generic 'Hey.'"

Quantitative data

"I would value features that encourage deeper topics..."

Desire for Deep Topics

4.25 / 5

Satisfaction w/ Small Talk

2.0 / 5

Note: Satisfaction with generic "small talk" is implied low based on qualitative frustration.

Recommendations

"Deep Dive" Prompts: Add optional cards in chat (e.g., "Travel dreams," "Dealbreakers") to skip small talk.

Shared-Topic Starters: Highlight overlapping interests (music, hobbies) with one-tap opener suggestions.

Conversation Mode: Experiment with a mode that pauses new swipes to focus strictly on existing matches.

INSIGHT 2

A "habit swiping" pattern risks empty engagement.

Qualitative Interview Responses

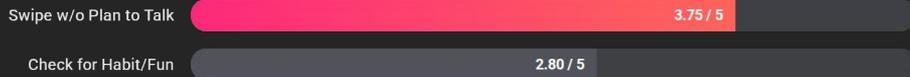
"I swipe a lot, but half the time I don't even intend to talk. It's just something to do."

"Every day, I open it 5-6 times and swipe... but I'm not trying to talk to people."

"It feels like a magic box, you know. When I'm lonely, I just go to the app."

"Swiping is fun, but messaging feels like work."

Quantitative data



Correlation Alert

Those who swipe more frequently are **more sensitive** to message feedback (ghosting/replies).

Recommendations

"Send This?" Prompt: When a match happens, show a pre-filled opener referencing a profile tag immediately.

Conversation Goals: Replace "X New Matches" stats with "Start 1 Real Conversation" goals.

Gentle Friction: "You have 5 unmatched chats. Want to say hi before swiping more?"

Design Goal: Intentionality

Shift users from "mindless swiping" to "mindful connecting" without destroying the fun factor.

INSIGHT 3

Initiation anxiety & fear of ghosting hold people back.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"Starting is nerve-wracking because if I mess it up or they ignore me, it feels bad enough to make me not try again."

"I feel anxious about myself when people I like don't like me back."

"I don't really message first... because I'm afraid they won't respond."

Quantitative data



Swiping is often a coping mechanism for boredom or loneliness, rather than a strategic search for connection. High swiping volume often correlates with low follow-through.

Recommendations

Provide pre-generated, playful openers users can customize to reduce "blank page" fear.

Micro-feedback: "Ghosting happens to everyone. Want to try a different opener?"

Nudge both sides to reply if they matched, framing it as "Don't leave them hanging."

Design Goal

Reduce the emotional risk of initiating conversations by creating features that increase reply likelihood, provide supportive messaging scaffolds, and normalize non-response.

INSIGHT 4

AI is a niche but high-leverage co-pilot.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"I don't want AI to date for me, but it can help me not sound boring or awkward."

"Help me stand out, not sound like everyone else."

"Suggesting emojis or catchphrases popular among Gen Z."

"AI can gather info and summarize the vibe."

Quantitative data

Interest is moderate, but specific features stand out.



Monetization Signal

Users with higher AI interest show **higher intent to subscribe** to Premium features.

Recommendations

- Premium Bundle: Bundle AI Bio Optimization and "Rescue Replies" into Gold/Platinum tiers.
- Human-in-the-Loop: Always allow users to approve/edit AI suggestions to maintain authenticity.
- Vibe Check: AI summary of a match's profile to suggest 2-3 tailored openers.

Design Goal

- "Make your message more YOU."
- Avoid framing AI as a robot doing the work. Frame it as an efficiency and confidence tool.

INSIGHT 5

Premium is understood but emotionally underwhelming.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"I wish premium could indicate who is more likely to get back to you."

"I feel like premium costs too much, and the hierarchy is unfair to regular users."

"I know Gold lets you see who likes you, but I don't think it's worth the price."

"I understand the different tiers, but the benefits don't feel special."

Quantitative data



Huge gap between "I know what it is" and "I want it."

Recommendations

Outcome Language: Change "See who likes you" to "Spend less time guessing, more time talking."

Compatibility Boosts: Prioritize showing profiles that are algorithmically likely to reply, not just nearby.

"Serious" Intent Badges: Premium-exclusive badges that signal "I'm here for a relationship," filtering out noise.

Strategy: Reframe Values

Move from "Power User Tools" to "Quality & Clarity Tools."

INSIGHT 6

Users request filters (race, interests, LGBTQ roles) to find "relevance."

USERS WANT POWER OVER RELEVANCE. THE CHALLENGE IS PROVIDING THIS WITHOUT ENCOURAGING DISCRIMINATION.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"For LGBTQ users, [we need] more categories (top/bottom)."

"Algorithms can be improved to feed people with the same hobbies."

"I wish we could filter race on Tinder." (Participant noted ethical concern.)

Recommendations

Tailored for Queer Users: Ensure matching/prompts feel relevant to queer dating norms (not just hetero scripts).

"Vibe" Filters: Allow filtering by "Communication Style" or "Love Language" rather than just physical traits.

Highlight Safety: For women and queer users, emphasize control features as safety tools.

INSIGHT 7

Performance glitches erase emotional wins.

THE SCREEN WOULD FREEZE WHEN SWITCHING THE MESSAGING PAGE.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"A super-matched girl was gone because the screen froze and that was the reason I turned to Hinge."

"Sometimes it takes a few minutes for a single message to be sent out."

"When I try to use Tinder in a different country, it seems to have bad connections all the time."

Recommendations

Prioritize fixing navigation bugs. A lost match due to a glitch is a severe trust-breaker.

Ensuring Tinder operates properly across different mobile devices
Examine usability across a global context.

INSIGHT 8

Experienced daters want efficiency. Newbies want guidance.

DIFFERENT GUIDANCES AND FEATURES SHOULD BE TAILORED TO USERS WITH DIFFERENT "DATING APP EXPERTISE."

Qualitative Interview Responses

Experienced: "I know how these apps work. I want tools that make it more efficient."

Newbies: "I'm still learning how to use this; I don't want to overcommit yet."

Recommendations

Gentle flow for first-timers explaining safety and conversation starters. Delay aggressive upsells.

Establish a brief onboarding tutorial that guides newbies.

For experienced users (3+ apps), highlight time-saving controls and filtering in upsell messaging.

INSIGHT 9

Gamification (streaks) motivates more than premium status.

MORE THAN THREE INTERVIEWEES INDICATED THAT THE INTERACTION
CAN BE MORE INTERESTING THROUGH GAMIFICATION.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"I think it will be really interesting to do friend streaks like Duolingo, I will definitely log on more frequently."

"When I used a dating app platform, 'Tantan,' in China, matched partners can play games embedded in the DM page."

"I wish there could be more interaction types other than simply texting."

Recommendations

'Reply Streaks': Reward 3-day conversation streaks with free Super Likes.

Incorporating simple games to facilitate interactions.

INSIGHT 10

Users find bio writing tedious but fear AI inauthenticity.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT USING AI TO CUSTOMIZE BIOS, PARTICIPANTS ARE SUSPICIOUS ABOUT IT AND THINK IT IS UNNECESSARY TO RECEIVE HELP FROM AI WHILE ADMITTING CONSTRUCTING A PROFILE IS VERY TIME-CONSUMING.

Qualitative Interview Responses

"To me, it feels like constructing a profile is very time-consuming."

"I don't need an AI to help me with writing my bios because AI doesn't know me at all."

"AI can give suggestions for filling out information, but I don't want it to write it for me."

Recommendations

Use autofilling to improve efficiency of making a profile.
AI suggestions on how to improve the profiles in order to attract new matches.



4. Conclusion

Roadmap and next
steps

Strategic Roadmap

Short Term

- ✓ Fix "match-loss" glitches.
- ✓ Add "Deep Dive" prompt cards in chat.
- ✓ Implement "Ghosting" micro-feedback.

Mid Term

- ✓ "Send This?" opener suggestions.
- ✓ Nudges for habitual swipers ("Start 1 conversation").
- ✓ Queer-specific tag updates.

Long Term

- ✓ Launch "AI Co-Pilot" Premium tier.
- ✓ Reframe Gold/Platinum value prop to "Certainty & Connection".

Risks & Limitations

Limitations

Sample Size: N=45 (38 recent). Small sample allows for qualitative depth but limits statistical generalization.

Self-Report Bias: Users may under-report passive usage or over-report "noble" intentions (desire for deep talk).

Convenience Sampling: Most participants are recruited via researcher's own social network, and the results may be biased based on ethnicity, location, interests, or economic status

Next Research Steps

- ✓ Usability test of an AI messaging prototype.
- ✓ Diary study on ghosting impact over 2 weeks.
- ✓ A/B test of "Conversation Mode" vs. Standard Swipe Mode.

Thank you for your time



Evaluation Form

Self-assessment: Use the blank space below to tell me **(a) the strengths of your assignment, (b) the weaknesses of your assignment or things you would do differently in the future,** and **(c) what total score you would give it,** based upon the rubric below. If you used any kind of AI support, you need to tell me how you used it and the value (or challenge) it added to your process.

I think the greatest strength of this assignment is that I was able to combine the results from my surveys and the responses from the follow-up interviews together, which not only support the insights but also, in some ways, explain the pattern presented by the data. Also, the presentation of data is clear and aesthetically pleasing—each insight includes data support, explanations, and recommendations. I also feel accomplished of this project since this is the very first professional report I have ever done.

The weakness of my assignment is that the sample size is not enough for generalizability and that the patterns analyzed are not very statistically significant due to a lack of effect size. In addition, I used convenience sampling for this assignment, which might lead to biases. Another problem I encountered during data collection was that some respondents did not take open-ended questions seriously, thus making it difficult to generate meaningful insights solely based on it. Luckily, I had time to do 5 interview sessions to gain further insights.

Due to the complexity of my project and the amount of effort I put into both qualitative and quantitative analysis, I will give myself a 240/250.

<p>Content 150 points</p>	<p>assignment covers the entire topic, deeply & creatively.</p> <p>150</p>	<p>assignment covers most of the topic, in an average manner.</p> <p>120-130 points</p>	<p>assignment covers only part of the topic, in a weak manner.</p> <p>105-119 points</p>	<p>assignment covers little of the topic, in a superficial manner.</p> <p><105 points</p>
<p>Readings and Course Understanding 50 points</p>	<p>assignment demonstrates 75-100% of the required readings/lectures, and uses them well.</p> <p>50</p>	<p>assignment demonstrates 50-75% of the required readings/lectures, , and/or uses them poorly.</p> <p>40-44 points</p>	<p>assignment demonstrates 25-50% of the required readings/lectures, , and/or uses them poorly.</p> <p>35-39 points</p>	<p>assignment demonstrates < 25% of the required readings/lectures, , and/or uses them poorly.</p> <p><35 points</p>
<p>Logic, flow and clarity 50 points</p>	<p>Ideas flow clearly and assignment uses strong writing. Deliverable looks highly polished and is thoughtfully designed.</p> <p>48</p>	<p>Ideas flow adequately, and/or writing could be stronger. Deliverable is thoughtfully designed.</p> <p>40-44 points</p>	<p>Ideas flow poorly OR writing is weak. Deliverable presentation is messy.</p> <p>35-39 points</p>	<p>Ideas flow poorly AND writing is weak. Deliverable presentation needs substantial improvement.</p> <p><35 points</p>
				<p>Total score:</p> <p>248</p> <p>Job well done! This looks fantastic!</p>