



*"This is strangely
addictive."*
Journal of IM Research Subject

About Weopia

Weopia is the world's first 3D virtual world dating service, wholly devoted to bridging the gap between traditional online dating and the time-consuming and intimidating first offline date. Virtucom Inc. began development of Weopia in Spring 2008 with a team from Canada, US, Germany, India, China and South Africa.

Weopia's purpose is to help the millions of singles and online daters to find love faster and with less risk by allowing them to meet in virtual worlds and to experience each other beyond that which text chatting allows. Weopia daters are able to develop a deeper understanding of their dating prospect's compatibility without leaving their home. Weopia works with any dating site and allows users to screen more potential mates in less time while protecting anonymity and providing another step towards ensuring a safe real life date.

Weopia users select an avatar and meet their date in an intimate person-to-person 3D virtual world, using voice and text chat while engaging in dating activities and conversation stimulators to get a better sense of each other. Weopia is the natural evolution of online dating, allowing users to find love faster and only meet in real life, those with whom they feel very comfortable.

Researchers at Harvard and MIT have scientifically proven that virtual dating has a critical place in the online dating process, leading to better first encounters offline. Those who use virtual dating are twice as likely to have more than one date offline. And they like each other more prior to that first date.

Points of Interest

- Virtual dating screens people on interpersonal attributes such as likeability, sense of humor and rapport. Traditional online dating sites screen on non-interpersonal attributes such as income, education, age and religion
- The Weopia experiential environment (doing something together) offers much more insight into the other's personality and compatibility
- Online daters that interact through virtual dating have more successful first offline encounters than those who only look at profiles and text chat
- Couples using Weopia before meeting offline will be twice as likely to have a second date

Notable

"Virtual dates bridge the gap between online and offline dating by increasing social presence in online interaction.... We suggest that online dating frequently fails to meet user expectations because people, unlike many commodities available for purchase online, are experience goods... Participants' reactions were more positive toward individuals whom they had Virtual Dated than toward those whose profiles they had seen.... people who engage in standard online dating (i.e., profile searches) show decreases in liking after face-to-face encounters (Norton, Frost, & Ariely, 2007); our results suggest that Virtual Dates may decrease this trend."

"People Are Experience Goods: Improving Online Dating With Virtual Dates," by Harvard and MIT researchers Frost, Chance, Norton, Ariely

Weopia is based in Canada and was founded by Dave Wilkie and Stefan Embleton. Les Titze and Mark Nicholson quickly entered the picture and helped resolve the final concept.