POWER LIST

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN THE ONLINE DATING INDUSTRY

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POWER LIST

Sam Yagan  
CEO  
The Match Group

Greg Blatt  
Chairman  
The Match Group

Sean Rad  
President & co-founder  
Tinder

Michael S. Egan  
CEO  
Spark Networks

Tang Yan  
Founder & CEO  
Momo

Noel Biderman  
Founder & CEO  
Ashley Madison

Neil Clark Warren  
Founder & CEO  
eHarmony

Andrey Andreev  
Founder  
Badoo

Aaron Schildkrout / Brian Schechter  
Co-founders  
HowAboutWe

Rose Gong  
Founder  
Jiayuan

Markus Frind  
Founder & CEO  
Plenty of Fish

George Kidd  
Chief Executive  
Online Dating Association

Cliff Lerner  
Founder & CEO  
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Joel Simkhai  
Founder & CEO  
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Robyn Exton  
Founder & CEO  
Dattch

Ross Williams  
CEO & co-founder  
White Label Dating

Dave Heysen / Daniel Haigh  
Co-founders  
Oasis

Brett Harding / Laurence Holloway  
Co-founders  
Lovestruck

Justin McLeod  
Founder & CEO  
Hinge

Shayan Zadeh  
Co-founder  
Zoosk
Welcome to the Power List 2015, Global Dating Insight’s guide to the most influential people in the online dating industry.

These are the people we believe are driving, shaping and developing this exciting industry. First of all, we have an admission - this is not a scientific process, and if we have made any omissions we apologise in advance.

Each person on the following pages meets our strict criteria, they are a proven leader within their field, with demonstrable power, influence and budgetary clout. What does it mean to make the Power List? It means the individuals listed are the stars of our industry at this particular moment. Power cannot be determined by your ranking on Google, yet we know it when we see it. Those that make the top 20 and our five “ones to watch” are leaders of this global industry.

These are interesting and exciting times for online dating, from mobile payments to monetisation and wearables, the industry and technology is developing at a rapid pace.

These issues may dominate industry debate, but it is talented people who will determine the industry’s future.

Finally, a thank you to White Label Dating for sponsoring the first issue of this annual industry report.

Simon Corbett
Founder

Simon Edmunds
Editor
WhiteLabelDating.com

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Whilst there may be thousands of dating sites worldwide, the online dating industry’s development is actually led by just a handful of key figures who are collectively responsible for generating over 90% of industry revenue.

Some of the influencers profiled in this book have higher profiles than others, but they are all united by a common theme: all surround themselves with skilled teams running their businesses from behind the scenes.

Last year, White Label Dating achieved annualised revenues of nearly $75m and welcomed our 40 millionth member. Without the incredible support and hard work of our network of over 1,700 partners, that would not have been possible.

This year’s Power List is not just a celebration of the industry’s key players. It’s a celebration of every person, in every online dating business, working together to achieve a common goal: to make it easier and safer to meet people than ever before.

It’s this common goal that drives innovation. 2014 was a landmark year for the online dating industry and I’m excited to reveal that founders of the year’s most cutting-edge apps, Robyn Exton of Dattch and Justin McLeod of Hinge, feature in this book.

It’s also important that while we celebrate, we reflect and recognise that the leaders of our industry are male by majority. If online dating is to truly become the #1 preferred way of meeting new people, we need to attract and retain more female talent in positions of leadership.

With profiled founders of dating businesses such as Zoosk and HowAboutWe moving on to new ventures at the time of writing, we can look forward to welcoming more diverse, new talent in 2015.

It’s the people that make our industry such a force to be reckoned with. That’s why White Label Dating is proud to sponsor Global Dating Insights’ inaugural Power List, in celebration of those who give our industry strength.

If you share my ethos, connect with me on Twitter @rosswilliams or LinkedIn.

All the best for 2015,

Ross Williams  
Co-founder and CEO  
White Label Dating®
Sam Yagan
CEO
The Match Group

Yagan is one of the most visible players in the online dating industry, and as a founder of OkCupid, he has been at the forefront of the dating industry for over 10 years. After he sold OkCupid to IAC and became the CEO of IAC’s dating segment, The Match Group, he now has massive influence over three of the industry’s biggest brands: Match.com, OkCupid and Tinder. As CEO of The Match Group, Yagan guided these businesses to generate revenues of over $780m, and profits of more than $260m, in 2013. He was also named in TIME’s 100 Most Influential People in the World list.

Tang Yan
Founder & CEO
Momo

Yan has created a massive messaging and flirt app, in the shadow of giant competitors like WeChat and Line. Their brand of location-based social discovery has proved hugely popular in China, with around 180m users. Momo recently filed for a US IPO, looking to raise $300m. Yan happily describes Momo as a cross between Snapchat and Tinder, and it has gained notoriety as a hookup app in a conservative culture - being dubbed “the magical tool for getting laid”. Considering the huge possibilities for dating services in Asia, Momo could well be seen as a trailblazer in years to come.

Sean Rad
President & co-founder
Tinder

Rad created the industry’s biggest success story in years with Tinder - which came out of IAC’s Hatch Labs - alongside Justin Mateen and Jonathan Badeen. Although he has recently lost his position as CEO of Tinder, he will continue on as President and have a seat on the board. The app, which has an estimated 50m users, has changed the online dating industry and Rad has a huge part to play in this. Tinder has also recently added two premium features, which may influence how mobile-only apps monetise in the future. How long Rad decides to stay on at Tinder remains to be seen, but his place in the history of the dating industry is secure.

Michael S. Egan
CEO
Spark Networks

After a fraught leadership crisis at Spark Networks last year, Osmium now control the board of the dating company, who own sites including JDate and Christian Mingle. Former CEO Greg Liberman has since departed, and Egan has been appointed the company’s new leader. Egan has a tough job on his hands, and will be seeking to reign in marketing spending and reposition these two huge brands, in order to steady the company and push growth again.
As one of the most controversial figures in the industry, Biderman is never far from the media spotlight. Despite what you think of Ashley Madison, the site has seen huge growth over the past few years, and their marketing campaigns have continued to create noise around the brand. They are also expanding into new markets in Asia, where many other companies have not ventured. The online dating industry certainly relies on perception from the public, and Biderman is an important and key player in shaping this.

Your career highlights:
Yet to come I hope!

App you can’t live without:
Minecraft. It keeps my son occupied on any flight.

Favourite quote:
"Never invest in anything that eats". My grandfather.

Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
Loro Piana. Some of the absolute best design in the world.

Professional inspiration:
Ambassador - I know that I would make a great diplomat, after all the world travels and media experience I’ve had over the last decade.

My alternative career would be:
The General Manager of an NBA basketball team. I would do that job for free!

Best advice you have received:
Pursue perfection, and everything else will fall into place.
Neil Clark Warren  
Founder & CEO  
eHarmony  
As founder of eHarmony, Warren is a highly visible and well known figure in the US, having created one of the most successful dating sites ever. Recently returning to helm eHarmony, the site of 13 years is moving itself forward, and he has been instrumental in reshaping the business. Under his direction, the Santa Monica-based company is also taking a big leap of faith outside the dating industry, looking to match up users for jobs. A bold move, it shows Warren's belief in his company, and that it has the power to improve people's lives.

Markus Frind  
Founder & CEO  
Plenty of Fish  
As owner of the biggest free dating site in the world, Markus Frind has been one of the most respected innovators in the industry for over a decade. By being both a pioneer of the free site model in the early days of online dating, and adapting to the current mobile landscape, Frind has had huge influence over the past, and will continue to have influence over the future of the industry.

Q Your career highlights: Having my findings cited in a paper that won the Fields Medal - Math's Nobel. When it comes to Plenty of Fish, the whole thing has been a highlight for me. But reaching 10m users on the site when I was still the only employee was pretty significant.

Q Favourite quote: "Get shit done" also, "Done is better than perfect" (on the wall in our office).

Q Outside of dating, the brand you admire most: Google.

Q Professional inspiration: For me, it comes from looking at our data.

Q My alternative career would be: I have been doing this for so long, I can't imagine anything else. It would be like watching grass grow.

Q Best advice you have received: Adapt or die. This industry changes so fast. You take what you've learned, and you keep starting over.

Q App you can't live without: Google Maps is the only app I actually use.

Rose Gong  
Founder  
Jiayuan  
As the founder of China's largest online dating site, Gong's story is one of the industry's best startup successes. Above the average age of marriage in China, and finding current matchmaking solutions very poor, Gong decided to create her own site - a story that is often-trotted out in the industry - with no prior experience, building Jiayuan in 2003. It has now over 100m members and IPO'd back in 2011. Despite taking a backseat at Jiayuan, with China as one of the most attractive markets for the future of online dating, Gong's influence will likely be felt for many years to come.

Aaron Schildkrout / Brian Schechter  
Co-founders & co-CEOs  
HowAboutWe  
Childhood friends Aaron Schildkrout and Brian Schechter built HowAboutWe into a fantastic brand with strong marketing and an innovative idea of taking people offline to meet. Its influence is noticeable in how many new companies want to achieve the same thing. And their couples service, which they launched in 2013, may well be viewed as ahead of its time, as dating sites of the future look to expand into new areas of growth. Although last year the company sold to IAC, we look forward to what these two dating innovators bring to the table in the next few years.

Andrey Andreev  
Founder  
Badoo  
Badoo is one of the few online dating companies that was able to really push into the international big league without looking to sell their business. Russian entrepreneur Andreev is a huge reason for their growth, especially in Europe, and their successes in driving mobile social discovery and small incremental payments will serve them well as they eye expansion into new markets.

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George Kidd  
Chief Executive  
Online Dating Association

The Online Dating Association is a UK-based body for regulation in the online dating industry, which counts Match.com, eHarmony, Lovestruck and Oasis as their members. After just over a year in the industry, Chief Executive George Kidd - who has a background in UK government regulation - and the ODA have made great strides to help the industry improve standards, by signing up dating sites to a code of conduct and best practice, to help drive greater accountability in our industry.

**Favourite quote:**
The whole of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address! The speaker before took over two hours. Lincoln spoke for two minutes; finishing even before the photographer could get ready. In the address, Lincoln said: “The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here”. Well…

**Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:**
Disney, for the way they identify, prioritise and robustly apply the criteria they set to maintain safety, fun and the user experience. At the other end of the spectrum, Childnet International: a not-for-profit based in a South London business park that deals with online safety, web education and supports anti-bullying and content classification work. The team never bemoan or wallow. They and their messages are positive. They put in more than they take out!

**Professional inspiration:**
Sir Peter North, formerly Chair of PhonepayPlus and Vice Chancellor at Oxford University. I didn’t have the fancy upbringing or amazing educational credentials that he saw on his “quad”. Peter took me on as a raw and virgin Chief Executive. He was always encouraging, endlessly patient and always helping me see the big picture. He had a flawless moral compass.

**Best advice you have received:**
“It’s more important to be respected than to be liked”. A big lesson for me.
Cliff Lerner
Founder & CEO
SNAP Interactive

As President and CEO of SNAP, Lerner’s Facebook-connected dating service AYI.com has had great success since launching in 2005. As one of the few publicly traded online dating companies, Lerner’s company has continued to innovate and grow in the social dating and location-based space, which has become such a huge part of the industry - along with their recent moves to build a dating portfolio.

Your career highlights:
It’s difficult to nail down just one of them but a few that come to mind:
• The day Snap Interactive became publicly traded;
• Ringing the NASDAQ opening bell;
• AreYouInterested becoming the 2nd largest Facebook Application.

Favourite quote:
1. Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.
2. You can’t improve what you don’t measure.

Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
San Antonio Spurs.

Professional inspiration:
Mark Zuckerberg & Warren Buffet.

My alternative career would be:
General Manager of an NBA team.

Best advice you have received:
It can takes years to build trust, but seconds to destroy it.

Justin McLeod
Founder & CEO
Hinge

McLeod is CEO of Hinge, which has established itself as one of the leading mobile apps in the post-Tinder landscape. Offering tailored friend of a friend matchmaking, the fantastic app has expanded across the US throughout 2014, and received significant investment from prestigious VC firms. McLeod and Hinge will be the ones to watch in the mobile dating space in the next few years.

Your career highlights:
BA Colgate, MBA Harvard. Management Consultant at PRTM prior to founding Hinge.

App you can’t live without:
Hinge, obviously.

Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
Uber, because they transformed something that was archaic and painful into something sophisticated and delightful.

Professional inspiration:
Richard Branson.
I COULDN’T LIVE WITHOUT GRINDR, SERIOUSLY. I’M ON IT EVERY DAY, TALKING TO MY FRIENDS AND MEETING NEW GUYS. ESPECIALLY WHEN I’M TRAVELING, I LOVE TALKING TO THE LOCALS - THEY ALWAYS KNOW THE BEST PLACES TO GO.
Simkhai’s Grindr was one of the true pioneers of mobile dating. Their location-based matching has had a phenomenal influence over the industry, and has paved the way for a whole new wave of mobile dating companies. And with their premium model, Grindr has been one mobile product that has turned their innovation into a viable business model, something very few similar products have managed to do.

**Your career highlights:**
Every milestone I had with Grindr stands out in my mind. From the moment I thought about the concept, to watching the idea come to fruition and seeing people use it every day. One moment that stands out in my mind is when I traveled to Europe a couple months after Grindr launched. I was at a café and I happened to notice a yellow glow coming from the table next to me – the men were on Grindr. It was my first international trip after launching the app and although I knew we had users all over the globe at that point, it didn’t hit me until I actually saw them using it and chatting. It was just a really cool moment. I love things that make life easier and that is what Grindr does for men around the world. It’s intuitive and simple.

**App you can’t live without:**
I couldn’t live without Grindr, seriously. I’m on it every day, talking to my friends and meeting new guys. Especially when I’m traveling, I love talking to the locals - they always know the best places to go. Another app I’m obsessed with is called Sleep Cycle. You put your phone on your bed, and using the phone’s accelerator it can tell what part of your sleep cycle that you’re in, depending on how much you move while sleeping. It wakes you when you’re in a lighter sleep mode so you won’t be as groggy when you wake up. I’ve been doing that for years, and I love it.

**Favourite quote:**
I just read the Steve Jobs biography, so a lot of his quotes are running through my head right now. One of the things I admired most about him was the fact that he was his own person. He had his own viewpoint, and he knew what he wanted. The quote that most encompasses that spirit is: “Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.”

**Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:**
Again, back to Steve Jobs, the answer has got to be Apple for me. When you look at what Apple has been able to do, they’ve made technology smart, sexy and something that’s easy to use. They’ve created new categories and new markets, whether it be the iPhone, the iPod, the App Store, or iTunes. All these things are a part of an ecosystem that benefits a lot of others - they create the roads and give developers a number of tools to utilize. It’s not just advancing technology; it’s creating a framework. Now that’s a brand.

**Professional inspiration:**
My professional inspiration comes from my family. I come from a family of entrepreneurs – my father is a diamond dealer and my mother is a jewellery designer, my younger brother started a fashion line and my older brother has his own business. Watching my parents make a living by following their passion and creating something with their hands really helped shape the way I am today. The way they conduct their business, overcome their own challenges, make the hard decisions and still maintain a work/life balance is inspirational. Seeing my family’s drive and success made me want and need to create a future as an entrepreneur.

**My alternative career would be:**
I was always destined to be an entrepreneur – it’s in my blood. So regardless of what industry it would be in, I would always be an entrepreneur. Providing simple solutions to a big problem is my passion.

**Best advice you have received:**
Of course it came from my mother – mothers give the best advice and mine is no exception. She would tell me, “If you don’t ask, the answer is no.” It reminds me to not let anything or anyone stop you, to keep moving forward and never stop trying. You’ve got to ask and you have to make it happen. It’s all about making an effort. Maybe you’ll get a no, but that’s not bad at all. I use that advice every day.
Robyn Exton
Founder & CEO
Dattch

Robyn Exton and Dattch have emerged as one of the best niche dating startups, and after launching in London, have moved over to the US, creating a very strong brand by focusing on good features, design and customer satisfaction. After Tinder’s success, founders like Exton will influence the industry in the coming years as new companies learn how to flourish in a changed landscape.

Q Your career highlights:
Yet to come! I hope! Launching Dattch in San Francisco was one of the most exciting days we’ve ever had. A few days before we’d won Best Designed App at Launch Festival & then we released the app at the Lesbians Who Tech conference to an incredible audience. They loved the app and it has grown rapidly in the US since that day.

Q App you can’t live without:
FaceTime mainly for when I’m in the US. My family never managed to get into the habit of Skype but somehow FaceTime works better for them, so it’s just an easy way to keep in touch.

Q Favourite quote:
“Good things come to those who get up and get shit done.”

Q Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
Warby Parker. Beautiful product, accessible pricing, great aesthetics, making buying glasses at whatever price feel high end. And donating to those without glasses from the beginning.

Q Professional inspiration:
Google never stop pushing boundaries, developing products, learning and improving. They’re an incredible business that value their employees and ultimately are changing the future of the world through technology.

Q My alternative career would be:
If I had to stop Dattch now and start a totally new career, I’d be an eBay retailer. I always want to sell stuff on there but run out of time.

Q Best advice you have received:
Don’t fall in love with your product, fall in love with your customer’s problem.
Since starting White Label Dating in his spare room in 2003 with Steve Pammenter, Williams has grown the company into the most successful white label dating provider in the world. The company now see annualised revenues of over £50m, and are active in English-speaking markets across the world, and have recently launched a big push into the US.

Your career highlights:
Too many to mention, but winning more awards than any other online dating company is a good place to start, including Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2013, Great British Entrepreneur Award – Ecommerce, 2013 and IoD Young Director of the Year, London and the South East. Global Personals has been consistently recognised in The Sunday Times Fast Track, Profit Track and International Track as well as placement within the Tech City UK Future Fifty.

App you can’t live without:
As a London resident now Citymapper is incredibly helpful, along with Hailo, Uber and Opentable. And of course the new Smooch.com app.

Favourite quote:
In business, revenue is vanity, profit is sanity, cash is reality.

Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
As a frequent traveller to the USA now, I really respect what British Airways are doing with their brand, particularly for business travellers. For such an established brand, they are really innovative at social and online marketing campaigns.

Professional inspiration:
I really respect what Barry Diller has done growing IAC group as a digital business, following his time in broadcasting. Alongside him, the usual entrepreneurial leaders such as Peter Jones in the UK.

My alternative career would be:
Cliché, but a fighter pilot. I was awarded a Royal Air Force Flying Scholarship and Bursary for University and enjoyed many hours flying before landing in the web world.

Best advice you have received:
It’s very simple - Just Do It. So many people fail to live their dreams because they don’t give it a try, fearing failure. Most of the time I find that rather than procrastinating for ages it’s best to just do it.
Lovestruck is one of the triumphs of the UK dating market, having seen superior growth over the past few years for their premium London dating. Their fantastic marketing has built them a strong brand in the capital, and they were quick to jump on and harness the mobile dating revolution. With just under 50% of revenue now coming from Asia, Brett and the Lovestruck team are a great example for dating startups looking to enter the industry and compete with the biggest players.

Brett Harding

Q Your career highlights:
Being shortlisted alongside such revered British businesses in high-profile awards have made perfect career highlights. Examples are:
• Winner, Santander Breakthrough 50 2014
• Winner, ‘Best Omnichannel Marketing Campaign’ | Marketing Week 2014
• 5th, ‘Fastest Growing UK Technology Company’ | Deloitte Fast 50 2013
• Winner, ‘Best International Business’ | British Young Business Awards 2013
• Finalist, ‘Small Online Business of the Year’ | National Business Awards 2012

Q App you can’t live without:
Soundcloud.

Q Favourite quote:
“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.” Alan Kay.

Q Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
One trumps them all: Apple.

Q Professional inspiration:
Steve Jobs: a tenacious, visionary genius of a salesman who relentlessly dreamt up products the public never realised it wanted, then realised it just had to have.

Q My alternative career would be:
Video games designer.

Q Best advice you have received:
“Have you heard of a new accelerator program called Seedcamp? It may be worth putting Lovestruck forward for that.”
Shayan Zadeh
Co-founder
Zoosk

Zoosk’s growth has been one of the industry’s biggest success stories of the past few years. Founded by Zadeh and Alex Mehr in 2007, Zoosk has grown internationally to house 26m members in over 80 countries. Having shelved plans for an IPO, the company is under new leadership, but Zadeh and Mehr built the brand into a massive player against huge competition.

Your career highlights:
Being the co-founder of Zoosk is by far the biggest highlight of my career. Knowing that everyday the result of my colleagues and my work helps singles around the world find love is very satisfying both personally and professionally.

App you can’t live without:
Soulver. I find myself doing mental calculations about all types of stuff all the time and this app makes that process very fast, easy and intuitive.

Favourite quote:
"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man." George Bernard Shaw

Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
Amazon: their relentless pursuit of satisfaction for their customers is amazing and inspiring.

Professional inspiration:
People who change a game, industry, or art form by orders of magnitude truly inspire me. Whether it’s learning about how Michael Jordan changed basketball, how Jeff Bezos changed retail, or how Elvis Presley shook rock’n’roll. Learning about their stories, their failures and their perseverance always energizes me.

My alternative career would be:
Chef: I love creating and I love food. And my friends tell me that my cooking is not too bad either!

Best advice you have received:
Do what you love. Everything else will follow.
As the number one dating site in Australia, Oasis quickly became one of the biggest players in the market since launching in 2008. Co-founders Dave Heysen and Daniel Haigh achieved this success only 18 months after launch. This year, the Australian-based free dating site struck a massive $90m merger deal with Fairfax Media’s RSVP site, which will further increase their influence in the Australian market and beyond.

Daniel Haigh

**Your career highlights:**
In 1999, we launched the Soulmates dating site, and had automatic sound effects go off in our office every time a purchase was made. I would say one of my early career highlights was when it got too noisy and had to be switched off. Since then, I have had many more career highlights, but nothing so memorable as the original success of Soulmates which was a ‘real deal’ dot com start up. In 2002, Soulmates was acquired by Match.com for US$24m when I was 26.

**App you can’t live without:**
Ingress by NianticLabs. “The world around you is not what it seems;” – Join the Enlightened!

**Favourite quote:**
“If you open your mind too much, your brains will fall out.” Tim Minchin.

**Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:**
It’s what the brand represents that is important to me, and being a tech guy I am loving how cloud computing is changing our world. So I guess AWS (Amazon Web Services) would be high on the list.

**My alternative career would be:**
I am without a backup plan. If I wasn’t doing software development / social networking or something technical, I would be out of a job.

**Best advice you have received:**
“Invest in your own business – not other people’s”. Lucia, my wife.

Dave Heysen

**Your career highlights:**
The Oasis Dating Network becoming the number one Australian dating site (according to Experian Hitwise) within 18 months from launch in April 2008.

**App you can’t live without:**
AFL (Australian Football League) App.

**Favourite quote:**
“I can’t believe they named a cathedral after a University.”

**Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:**
Google.

**My alternative career would be:**
Something in the sporting industry.

**Best advice you have received:**
When a company grows too quickly, A graders hire B Graders. Then B graders hire C graders, and then you are in trouble.
ON OUR RADAR

Tanya Fathers
Founder & CEO
Dating Factory

Jonathan Bird
Owner
Singles Warehouse

Michael O’Sullivan
CEO
Hub People

Mark Brooks
CEO
Online Personals Watch and Courtland Brooks

Nick Tsinonis
Co-founder
Scamalytics
Tanya Fathers
Founder & CEO
Dating Factory
Fathers founded and built Dating Factory into one of the most successful white label platforms in the dating industry. With partners operating in both Europe and English-speaking markets, Dating Factory is a multimillion dollar company, and Fathers’ leadership has been instrumental in building this formidable brand.

Your career highlights:
Making my first million with my own company DatingFactory.com, all the rest was easy.

App you can’t live without:
Weather J.

Favourite quote:
Don’t work hard, work smart.

Outside of dating, the brand you admire most:
Virgin.

Professional inspiration:
Pathetically, but still Richard Branson.

My alternative career would be:
Garden architect/designer.

Best advice you have received:
Do not ever give up.

Michael O’Sullivan
CEO
Hub People
Leading white label provider Hub People since 2009, Michael O’Sullivan is a well-known and widely-respected member of the industry. Hub People have grown in stature throughout his leadership, winning many awards for their solution, and becoming one of the top players in the market. A regular member on industry panels, O’Sullivan’s expertise is clear from the insight and understanding he has of the dating industry.

Nick Tsinonis
Co-founder
Scamalytics
Tsinonis and Scamalytics have done fantastic work fighting one of the plagues of the industry - scammers. Their scam detection software helps to improve customer satisfaction and safety, while also increasing trust in our industry and driving up standards. Technology like this, if adopted by dating sites, will help to improve the dating industry, and how it is perceived by the general public.

Your Career Highlights:
Landing in London in 1997 from South Africa with nothing and finding it pretty easy to find contract work as a programmer. Taking a risk in 2002 and investing in my own business, SAREunited.com, which went to 1m users within 2 years and was profitable from month one.

Moving into the dating industry has been a rollercoaster journey. From yesnomayB.com, which failed due to not being able to secure a next round of investment, to successfully running Recsys (matching users) and Scamalytics (stopping dating fraud) Software-as-a-service businesses today.

App you can’t live without:
Skype.

Favourite quote:
Have this up on the wall of my office, by Charles Darwin: “It is not the strongest

Mark Brooks
CEO
Online Personals Watch and Courtland Brooks
As founder of Online Personals Watch, Brooks has been an influential player since 2004. He also wields influence as head of Courtland Brooks, advising companies within the online dating industry on strategy and growth. Alongside Marc Lesnick, Brooks also hosts and created iDate, the industry’s main events company, which holds conferences about the dating industry around the world.

Jonathan Bird
Owner
Singles Warehouse
A White Label Dating Partner with growing clout in the industry. Bird runs a number of dating sites through White Label Dating throughout the UK and rapidly growing US. This year he sold his previous business to focus on online dating full time. Based in Guildford his detailed understanding of SEO and eye for a profitable niche make him a rising star.