

## For Immediate Release

### **EHARMONY, MATCH.COM PARTICIPATE IN NAD FORUM** *NAD Recommends Match.com Modify, Discontinue Certain Claims for 'Chemistry.com' Service*

New York, NY – September 12, 2007 – The National Advertising Division (NAD) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus has recommended that **Match.com.**, modify or discontinue an certain advertising claims for the company's "**Chemistry.com**" online dating service. Advertising claims for Chemistry.com were challenged by **eHarmony.com**, the operator of a competing relationship site.

NAD, the advertising industry's self-regulatory forum, requested substantiation for a health and quantified performance claim that appeared in print and Internet advertising.

Claims at issue included:

- *"Introducing Chemistry.com—the first online personals site to understand the importance of chemistry in dating, serious relationships and even marriage."*
- *"At Chemistry.com we move beyond online personals and get you out dating in the real world faster, because that's what really matters to single men and women who are seeking serious relationships or even marriage."*
- *"Once we have your results, we use the latest science of attraction to predict which single men and women you'll have a relationship and dating chemistry with."*
- *"It's our belief that meaningful relationships are built on two equally important foundations: compatibility and chemistry. Other sites may help you find out if you're compatible, but only Chemistry's next-generation system, based on years of research into human attraction and successful relationships, is designed to help you find both of these essential elements."*
- *"An advanced matching system that combines compatibility with chemistry"*
- *"Chemistry.com is the first site to match by both compatibility and chemistry."*
- *"Chemistry.com is unique in several other ways as well. The 1-2-3 Meet process enables you to learn some important things about your potential partner before you meet, hence alleviating some of the awkwardness of your first encounter. The scheduling tool makes it easy to find a time and place to meet. Chemistry.com also provides you with potential matches so you don't have to make the initial approach yourself."*

By way of background, the advertiser explained that the Chemistry.com matching system is based on research that was conducted and gathered by Dr. Helen Fisher. It explained that Dr. Fisher's research indicates that three basic brain circuits have evolved for reproduction – "sex drive," "romantic love," and "attachment" or the calm and security felt with a long-term mate. The advertiser explained that its Chemistry.com site was designed to match people "for the purpose of triggering the brain system associated with early-stage romantic love or attraction" and initiating a long term relationship. In other words, Chemistry.com seeks to match members whom it believes, based in part upon their brain chemistry, are likely to be attracted to one another.

The challenger contended that Match.com offers no reliable or valid evidence to substantiate claims that it can match people based on their chemical profiles or chemically-based personality trait – or on any other common understanding of the word "chemistry." The challenger argues that Dr. Fisher concedes that the basis of Chemistry.com's purported matching system is theoretical.

Following its review of the evidence, which included a wide range of studies and articles, including articles authored by Dr. Fisher, NAD concluded that the record was insufficient to support the claim that Chemistry.com uses "the latest science of attraction to predict which single men and women you'll have relationship and dating chemistry with," and recommended that this claim be discontinued.

NAD found that the comparative claim that Chemistry.com was the "first site to match by both compatibility and chemistry" was not supported and recommended that it be discontinued. NAD also recommended that the advertiser discontinue the claim that "only Chemistry's next-generation system, based on years of research into human attraction and successful relationships, is designed to help you find both [compatibility and chemistry.]"

NAD recommended that the advertiser discontinue the unsupported claims that Chemistry.com was the first Website to understand the importance of chemistry, and that Chemistry.com can "get you out dating in the real world faster."

NAD further recommended that the advertiser modify its claim that Chemistry.com is unique in that it "provides you with potential matches so you don't have to make the initial approach yourself."

Finally, NAD determined that consumers are unlikely to interpret the claim that Chemistry.com can "combine compatibility and chemistry" as a "brain chemistry" claim.

Match.com, in advertiser's statement, said it respectfully disagrees with certain of NAD's findings, "including its principal conclusion that the extensive research conducted by Dr. Helen Fisher and provided by Match.com in support of the core 'science of attraction' claim has not yet advanced to a stage where it can support an efficacy claim relating to 'predicting with whom a person will have dating chemistry.'"

"NAD's decision relies heavily on quotes from Dr. Fisher describing her ongoing research as 'preliminary.' Such reliance is inappropriate because it disregards the extensive research already conducted both by Dr. Fisher and other scientists. Match.com remains committed to working with Dr. Fisher on this important research," the company said. "Nevertheless, Match.com respects the process of industry self-regulation and this forum, and will discontinue the claims at issue in future advertising for the Chemistry.com site."

**NAD's inquiry was conducted under NAD/CARU/NARB Procedures for the Voluntary Self-Regulation of National Advertising. Details of the initial inquiry, NAD's decision, and the advertiser's response will be included in the next NAD Case Report.**

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The National Advertising Review Council (NARC) was formed in 1971 by the Association of National Advertisers, Inc. (ANA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies, Inc. (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation, Inc. (AAF), and the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB). Its purpose is to foster truth and accuracy in national advertising through voluntary self-regulation. NARC is the body that establishes the policies and procedures for the CBBB's National Advertising Division (NAD) and Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU), as well as for the National Advertising Review Board (NARB) and Electronic Retailing Self-Regulation Program (ERSP.)

NAD and CARU are the investigative arms of the advertising industry's voluntary self-regulation program. Their casework results from competitive challenges from other advertisers, and also from self-monitoring traditional and new media. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), the appeals body, is a peer group from which ad-hoc panels are selected to adjudicate those cases that are not resolved at the NAD/CARU level. This unique, self-regulatory system is funded entirely by the business community; CARU is financed by the children's advertising industry, while NAD/NARC/NARB's sole source of funding is derived from membership fees paid to the CBBB. ERSP's funding is derived from membership fees to the Electronic Retailing Association. For more information about advertising self regulation, please visit [www.narcpartners.org](http://www.narcpartners.org).