

Executive Summary & Framing

Bumble is a social media dating platform geared towards women's safety. After serving as the Vice President of Marketing for online dating giant, Tinder, and experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace, Whitney Wolfe Herd founded Bumble with the intention of creating an online dating space where women could exercise more control over their dating lives. In February 2021, Herd became the [youngest female CEO](#) to ever take a company public.

As the pandemic nears an end, companies like Bumble need to review their role in the safety and security of their users. In some places, vaccinations are on the rise and encouraging many young people to get back to dating while in others, COVID-19 still poses a major concern for dating in person.

Goal

1. To mitigate a potential crisis around dating in person as vaccinations increase *and* to encourage users in hotspot areas to remain careful.
2. To ensure that Bumble users do not act irresponsibly and contribute to endangering the health of others.
3. To drive more users to Bumble and away from competitors.

Theoretical Backing

Systems theory approach: Evaluating relationships and structure relating to the whole, which is the online dating ecosystem. In this view, the whole system is considered as broken and predisposed to crisis around safety and well-being.

Agenda setting theory: This work aims to help set the agenda for the industry going forward, shaping the discussion around platforms and the interactions between users.

Type of Crisis

Reputational: Making sure that the potential systemic crisis (irresponsible use of dating apps post-pandemic/bad actors using the app) does not get associated with Bumble in the future.

Safety: Encouraging the safe use of the platform and safe in-person dating for users of Bumble, which could lead to a worse public health crisis in COVID-19 hotspots.

Stakeholders

Users: The reason that users value Bumble is because of the added safety dimension. In order to ensure that Bumble's environment stays safe, we must make sure that all users continue to contribute to that safe environment by being responsible.

Investors: After Bumble's recent IPO, we recognize that investors play a key role in the long-term financial well-being of the company. With that in mind, while we have investor satisfaction in mind, we are prioritizing users as key stakeholders. We hope to attract investors who see value in the way we treat our users.

Facts & Features

1. Online dating on the rise: Bumble saw a 23% increase in sent messages in New York City and a 26% increase in San Francisco during the first ten days of last March's shelter-in-place order.
2. Bumble introduced new safety features: Video chat, Night In (Video game icebreakers), and changes to its Unmatch settings:
 - a. When it comes to video dating, 63% users consider it safe, and 50% say it helps speed up the process of finding out if the person is right.
 - b. Night In is an expansion of Bumble's existing video dates feature. The feature has seen a marked increase in demand as a result of the pandemic; Bumble says its voice and video calling features were used 70% more after the pandemic started.
 - c. Following the Unmatching update, when one user unmatches the other, the match and the chat with the other user will disappear for the person who does the unmatching. Therefore, if a bad actor chooses to harass someone through the app, they cannot unmatch to avoid being reported.
3. Americans are getting [vaccinated](#) at a high rate, with metropolitan areas leading the way.
4. Domestic violence is up during the [pandemic](#), meaning investment in safety is crucial.
5. In a recent survey, Bumble says almost half of respondents in the US said they preferred a first date to be virtual rather than in person:
 - a. 81% of users would now take more time before opening up, and meeting someone in person.

Media References

1. [Inside Hook](#): An Ex-Tinder and Bumble Scientist Predicts the Future of Online Dating
2. [Fortune](#): Activity on dating apps has surged during the pandemic
3. [TZR](#): The Dating App Trend That Users Still Want In A Post-Pandemic World
4. [The Washington Post](#): What's sexy in a pandemic? Caution.
5. [Bumble](#): Safety First: 7 Steps to a Worry-Free First Date

6. [Safety.com](#): Here Are the 10 Safest Dating Apps for 2021 “They’ve (Bumble) even pioneered a Private Detector that blurs certain anatomical features of those unwanted nudes.”
7. [Bumble Blog](#): The COVID Conversation
8. [Love](#): Tons more Bumble blog posts addressing the pandemic and how to stay safe-Tinder, on the other hand, hasn’t done anything of the sort
9. [How to](#): Bumble Makes Reporting Hate Speech, Catfish, and More Even Easier
10. [Bumble Blog](#): Bumble x Straight But Not Narrow: Break the Silence Project
11. [HT Tech](#): Bumble hits 4 million users in India, women continue to make the first move
12. [The Verge](#): Bumble’s new Night In feature is an attempt to break the ice on virtual dates
13. [Tech Crunch](#): Bumble’s new feature prevents bad actors from using ‘unmatch’ to hide from their victims

Strategy Guidance

Long-term threat: Instructing & adjusting information

- Protect Reputation
- Reduce likelihood of negative word of mouth

Timing: Instructing & adjusting information

- Protect Reputation
- Reduce likelihood of negative word of mouth

Strategies

1. *Bolster/Reminder*: Bumble has been proactive in it’s pandemic response to support people safely make connections and build relationships. Telling people that Bumble has a good history of caring for users and that Herd is a CEO who cares during this challenging time.
2. *Differentiation*: Bumble was built to keep women safe and—looking at the positive qualities of the platform—is designed to be different and better than other platforms in the safety of users. Through a policy of full disclosure, we have consulted medical professionals on issues of public safety and refer to these experts throughout our FAQ sections.
3. *Media monitoring*: We use social media to monitor the extent of issues internationally and nationally around the world. We know our users are social media savvy and want to meet them where they are while staying on top of potential issues:
 - a. If they want to exercise any of their rights listed in the privacy policy, they can visit Bumble’s [Feedback Page](#) or email them at DPO@team.bumble.com.

4. *POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS for escalating crisis:*

- a. *Scapegoat:* Other dating applications, such as Tinder, do not protect minority groups. The design caters to men of privilege, and does not provide many protections for women or LGBTQ+ communities. It is well-known for being a hookup app. It also has a number of fake accounts and bots inundating the application. All of these aspects, in a post-pandemic world, need to change for the better.
- b. *Prepare for potential blowback:* Our plan may come off as too “preachy”—people may go to competitors if we kill the buzz—but Bumble was founded on strong values such as safety and personal responsibility, so losing the users who do not abide by that would be a blessing in disguise.

Press Strategy

Social media platforms, national outlets, women’s focused-outlets, and tech outlets that are places our users may read, especially online during the pandemic. We think it is important to address this issue where people are and that includes online and in-app messaging that differs by country.

Official statement

Hi, I’m Whitney Wolfe Herd, the founder and CEO of Bumble. And this is my son, Bobby. We’re speaking up today as the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have an end in sight and to thank you all for using our app to get through such a challenging time. We know that for many people, being fully vaccinated means a chance to get out there, to connect with others in person, and regain social connections that the virus stole from us all. But for others, returning to in-person dating and socialization may be scary or stressful. For all of our users—both in the US and abroad—we want safety to be the number one priority no matter how you Bumble.

Unlike other dating platforms feeding off a hook up culture that endangers the safety of women and disadvantaged groups, Bumble takes safety seriously and we want to encourage everyone interested in dating to decide what they’re comfortable with, talk openly about how you want dating to look, and feel safe when you venture out. With regards to getting physically intimate, being honest about what you’re comfortable with will not only give you a chance to connect with someone more deeply, but it could also help you actually enjoy the experience more.

For those who enjoyed the extra online “foreplay” and screening process, we will continue to develop the safety measures introduced during the last year, including in-app video chats, games and new reporting features for if a potential connection goes south. We are committed to the safety of not only our users, but the safety of everyone in our communities who are venturing back into the world. We are proud to announce an [abuse report of only 0.008%..](#)

Still, we understand that the world looks and feels differently in different places. The safety of our international users is just as important and we want to urge users in COVID-19 hotspots to

remain safe and use our new features to date in a way that follows local regulations and laws around public health and safety.

Thank you for trusting bumble in helping you spark strong, exciting, and most importantly, healthy connections.

Q&A

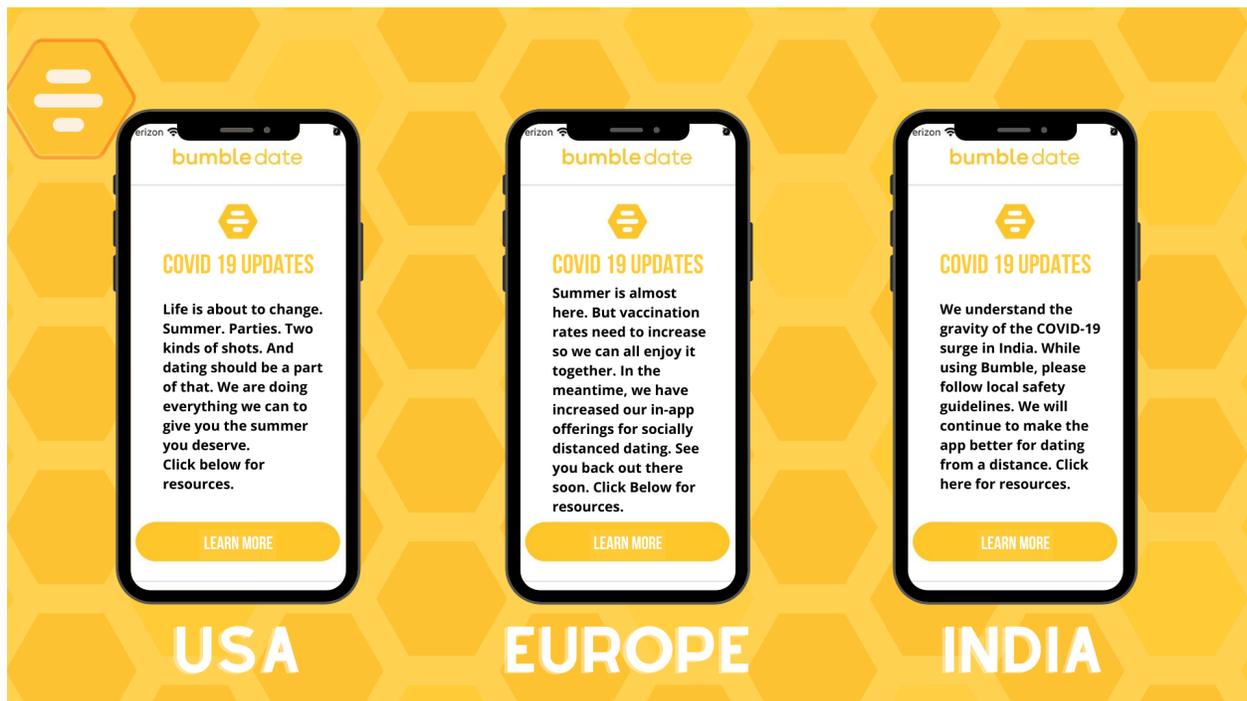
1. What avenues are there for parents to understand their children's safety on Bumble in light of new safety features emerging?
 - a. We maintain an FAQ that is regularly updated to highlight new features.
2. What are you doing for underprotected groups like the Black trans community, who may need different and/or additional safety features?
 - a. We are working with consultants and users from those communities to understand how we can be more inclusive.
3. Are Bumble, and other dating apps, responsible for a significant COVID-19 spread?
 - a. We feel that online dating isn't a main driver of the spread, but we are ensuring that we do our part regardless.
4. How are you accounting for cultural differences across countries when thinking about safety features?
 - a. We have an international team that helps us understand the specific needs of users in other countries.
5. How safe is a user's private information?
 - a. We regularly review the period for which personal information is required for machine learning purposes and delete any identifiable information when it is no longer required. We do this in order to ensure that users have the best possible experience with our application.
6. How is the location tracking information being used by the application? Is the information being sold to other companies and/or given to the government?
 - a. Bumble does not sell your data and has not sold your personal data in the previous 12 months.
7. What is Bumble doing to ensure that people in countries that don't yet have access to vaccines are staying safe?
 - a. We are encouraging users to follow the local regulations regarding COVID-19 safety while continuing to roll out safety-oriented features.

In-app messaging:

India: We understand the gravity of the COVID-19 surge in India. While using Bumble, please follow local safety guidelines. We will continue to make the app better for dating from a distance. Click [here](#) for resources.

EU: Summer is almost here. But vaccination rates need to increase so we can all enjoy it together. In the meantime, we have increased our in-app offerings for socially distanced dating. See you back out there soon. Click [here](#) for resources.

USA: Life is about to change. Summer. Parties. Two kinds of shots. And dating should be a part of that. We are doing everything we can to give you the summer you deserve. Click [here](#) for resources.



[Statement Video](#)

###



BUMBLE DATING AFTER CORONAVIRUS

What changes are waiting
for us in the future?

OUR TEAM

01 **Nicholas Budler**
Consultant



Victoria Gomes-Boronat **02**
Consultant



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CHANGES IN DATING

Background Information,
Facts and Figures &
Media References

01

BACKGROUND



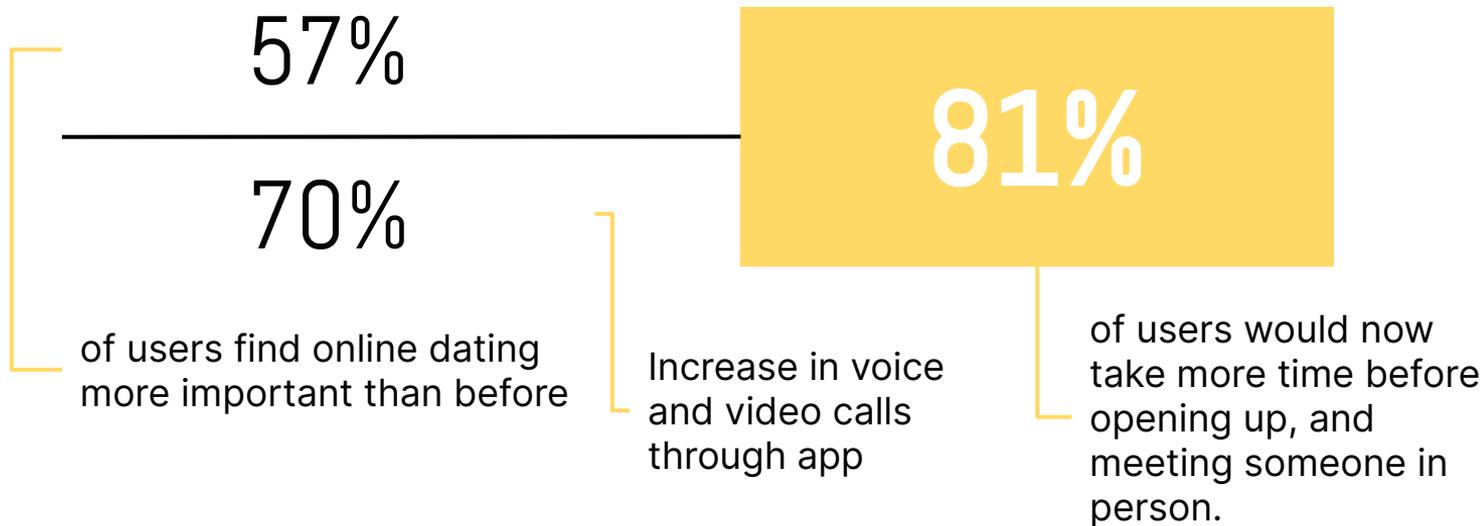
- Bumble is a social media dating platform geared towards women's safety.
- Whitney Wolfe Herd founded Bumble with the intention of creating an online dating space where women could exercise more control over their dating lives and consequently be safer.
- In February 2021, Herd became the youngest female CEO to ever take a company public.
- The pandemic caused a surge in dating app usage across the world
- Vaccinations are on the rise and encouraging many young people to get back to in-person dating

42,000,000

Number of Bumble users
around the world

THE PANDEMIC

Let's refresh our memory with some data about COVID's effect on dating app usage



These two contrasting trends will tell us what's to come and what to expect

01

Safety Focused Dating

More video chatting for dates, new and better dating habits, reduction of inequality and harassment

02

Roaring 20s Debauchery

Irresponsible app usage, non compliance with local regulations and potentially causing new outbreaks

NEW FEATURES



Video Calls

In-app calling feature without giving your number



Unmatching

This is a powerful tool that can help us keep everyone safer



NSFW Photo Censoring

AI identifies and blurs photos that may not be welcomed



Night In

At-home and in-app games for those who prefer to stay home

02

CRISIS

EVALUATION

Goal, Theoretical Backing,
Crisis & Stakeholders

- To mitigate a potential crisis around dating in person as vaccinations increase *and* to encourage users in hotspot areas to remain careful.
- To ensure that Bumble users do not act irresponsibly and contribute to endangering the health of others.
- To drive more users to Bumble and away from competitors.

01



Reputational

Preventing negative actions from association with Bumble

02



Safety

Encouraging the safe use of dating apps during COVID-19 pandemic

01

Systems Theory

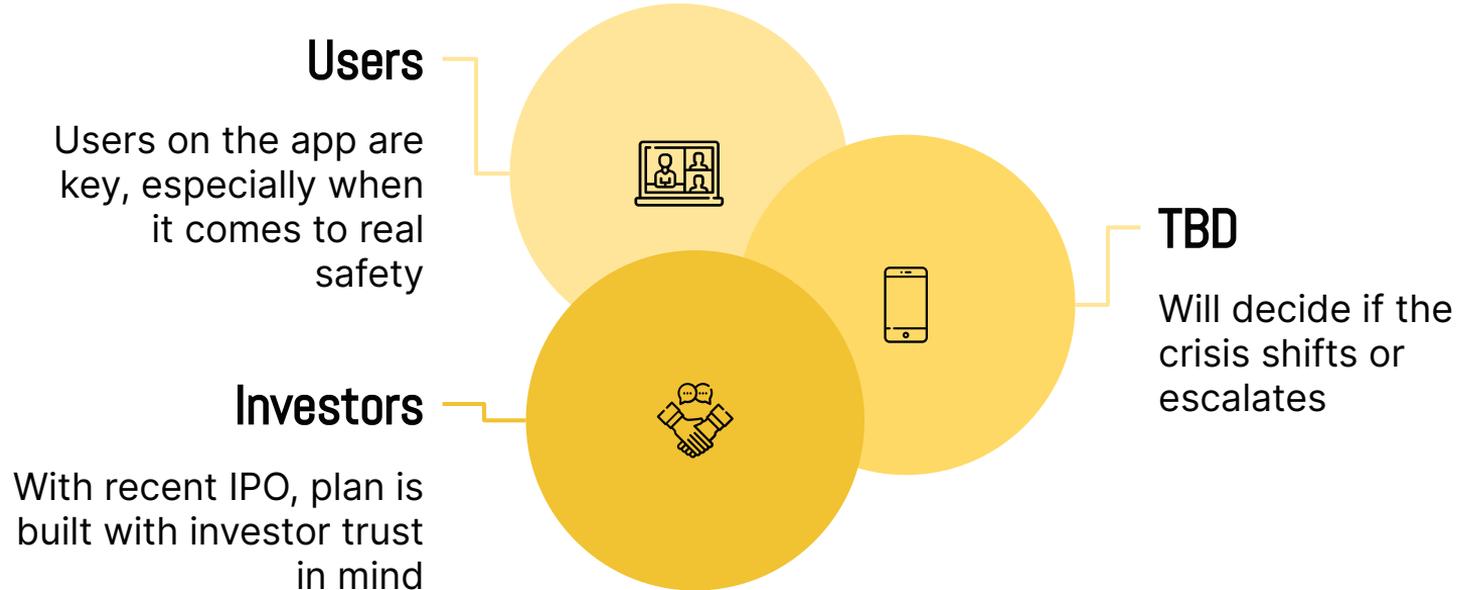
Evaluating crisis in light of the whole, which is a broken dating system

02

Agenda Setting

Trying to shape the agenda for online dating culture that emphasizes safety

Main Stakeholders



CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

Frameworks, strategies,
statement & FAQ

03

01

Long-Term Threat

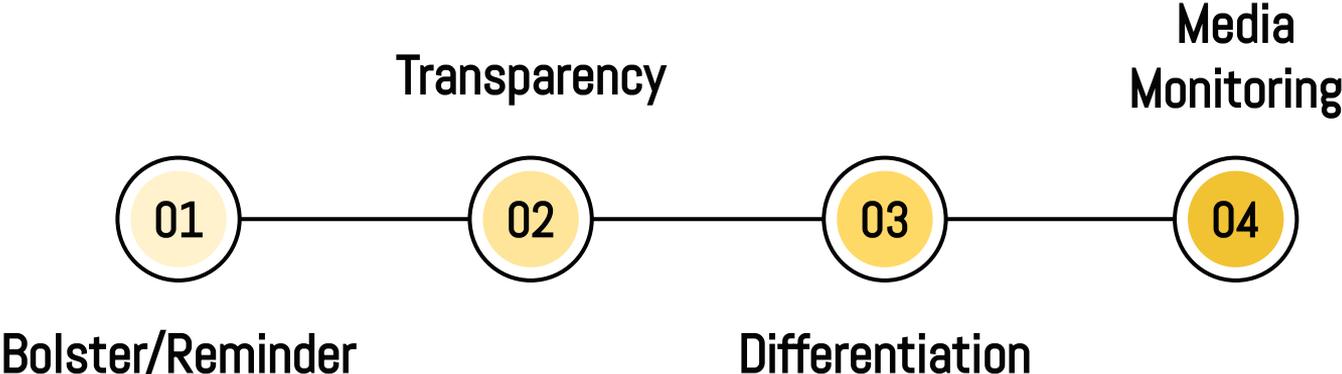
- Protect reputation
- Prevent negative word-of-mouth
- Ensure that community health and safety is not compromised

02

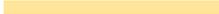
Instructing Info (Timing)

- Protect reputation
- Prevent negative word-of-mouth
- Ensure that community health and safety is not compromised

OUTLINE



BOLSTER/REMINDER

- 
- Bumble has been proactive in it's pandemic response in order to support its mission in helping people safely make connections and build relationships.
 - Telling people that Bumble has a good history of caring for users and that Herd is a CEO who cares during this challenging time.

Bumble is differentiating itself from other platforms by being transparent and building a more inclusive platform.

- Bumble was built to keep women safe and--*looking at the positive qualities of the platform*--is designed to be different and better than other platforms in the safety of users.
- Bumble was the first to implement **video chatting in app**--competitors followed suit
- We have **consulted medical professionals** on issues of public safety and refer to these experts throughout our FAQ sections.
- We have frequently updated our Beehive Blog to **give people instructing information about dating safely** in the pandemic and will continue to do so.
- We will update people if new hotspots emerge and **adjust our messaging/guidance** accordingly

- We use social media to **monitor the extent of issues internationally and nationally**. We know our users are social media savvy and want to meet them where they are while staying on top of potential issues.
- Bumble will monitor user reports and **investigate anyone who has been reported** for using the app inappropriately.
 - If users want to exercise any of their rights listed in the privacy policy, they can visit Bumble's [Feedback Page](#) or email them at DPO@team.bumble.com.

Our plan may come off as too “preachy”- people may go to competitors if we kill the buzz *but* Bumble was founded on strong values such as safety and personal responsibility, so losing the users who do not abide by that would be a blessing in disguise.

- While Bumble builds a platform and features that facilitate a virtual safe environment, it's up to the users to use it wisely and create that safe environment.
- The majority of Bumble users use and stay on the platform because of its safety

HOW CAN WE CONNECT?

- **Through Tech**

- Video calling
- Texting
- Online games

- **In-person**

- One to one
- Small gatherings
- Keeping distance

Press Strategy



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- We think it is important to address this issue where people are and that includes online and in-app messaging that differs by country.

Action Items

PSA/Testimonial

Video

Brief video statement to address stakeholders

In-app

Messaging

Messages depending on location

Blog updates and interviews w/press

Continue to publish updates and provide thought leadership to press

Monitor

Socials

Continue to monitor socials to get ahead of any crises

Data Analysis

App usage data analysis to see the effectiveness of safety features

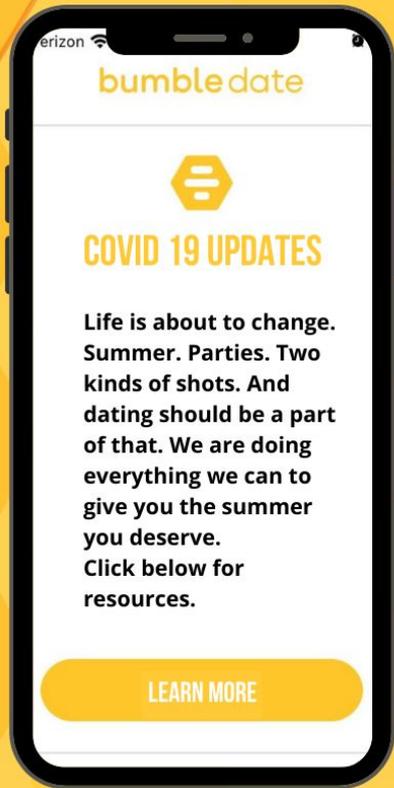
Addition of new features

Adding more games and entertainment features to encourage online dates

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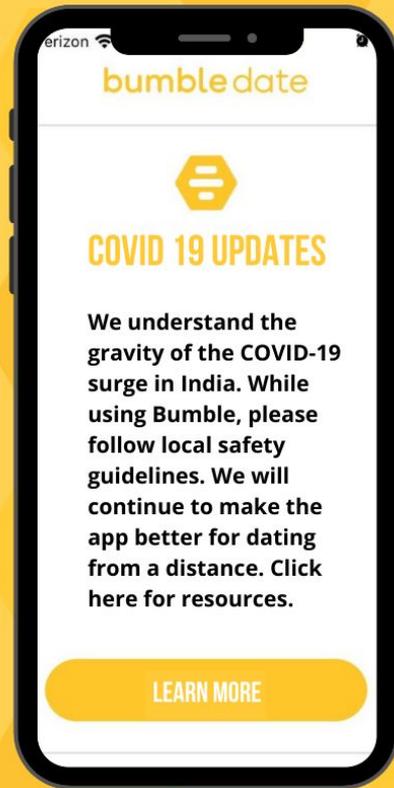
VIDEO STATEMENT



USA



EUROPE



INDIA

MEDIA REFERENCES

[Inside Hook](#): An Ex-Tinder and Bumble Scientist Predicts the Future of Online Dating

[Fortune](#): Activity on dating apps has surged during the pandemic

[TZR](#): The Dating App Trend That Users Still Want In A Post-Pandemic World

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“More genuine connections are forming out of this, and people are really, you know, being secure in who they’re meeting before that eventual physical meet-up ever begins,”

—**Whitney Wolfe Herd,**
Founder of Bumble and former
co-founder of Tinder

